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**Master's Thesis of Public Administration**

**Civil Servants' Perceptions on the Relationship  
between Decentralization and Public Service  
Delivery in Jinja District Local Government  
Sub Counties**

**지방분권과 공공서비스제공 관계에 대한  
진자 지역 지방자치단체 공무원의 인식 조사**

**August 2020**

**Graduate School of Public Administration  
Seoul National University  
Global Public Administration Major**

**Obel Thomas**

# **Civil Servants' Perceptions on the Relationship between Decentralization and Public Service Delivery in Jinja District Local Government Sub Counties**

**Academic Advisor Kim, Soon Eun**

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**Graduate School of Public Administration  
Seoul National University  
Global Public Administration Major**

**Obel Thomas**

**Confirming the master's thesis written by  
Obel Thomas**

**June 2020**

**Chair**

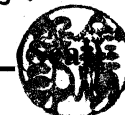
**Ko, Kilkon**



**Vice Chair**

**Jörg Michael Dostal**

A handwritten signature in black ink, placed next to the printed name of the Vice Chair.



**Examiner**

**Kim, Sooneun**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this piece of work to my parents Mr. Orech Francis and Mrs Orech Santa, my Sisters Josephine and Jackie and to my dear wife Mrs. Nyamwenge Prisca.

**ABSTRACT**

**Civil Servants' Perceptions on the  
Relationship between  
Decentralization and Public Service  
Delivery in Jinja District Local  
Government Sub Counties**

**Thomas Obel  
Global Public Administration Major  
The Graduate School of Public Administration  
Seoul National University**

The researcher investigated the Civil servants' perception on the relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties, Uganda. The rationale of the study was that despite several interventions by the government and its development partners to improve service delivery inform of institution of decentralization of planning, implementation and monitoring to the local governments, service delivery still remained poor in terms of increased quality, access and timeliness among others. Therefore the study particularly sought to establish the civil servants' perception on decentralized planning; decentralized implementation; decentralized monitoring and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties. Following a largely qualitative as well as exploratory and case study design, the researcher collected qualitative data from a sample

of 25 respondents. The researcher used interviews as a guide for data collection. Data was synthesized, analyzed and reviewed to obtain insights and study conclusive information. The researcher found that an overwhelming consensus among the participants that joint problem identification with the involvement of the locals helped to improve service delivery; decentralized implementation helped reduce on the cases of mismanagement of resources; and some lower local governments, community members' participation in monitoring had been long dropped or poorly managed which results into poor service delivery. It concluded that the more effective involvement of local community members in problem identification, the more empowered the community members are in discussing customer needs and hence the better the lower local governments are placed as far as service delivery is concerned; there was limited tendency for strategic implementation and often inadequate coordination of actors; and weak inspection was a top factor in explaining service deliverables such as medicines not always reaching the beneficiaries meaning that decentralization has not completely solved the challenge of inadequate monitoring of services.

**Keywords:** Decentralization, Decentralized Planning, Decentralized Implementation Decentralized Monitoring & Public Service Delivery.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	i
DEDICATION .....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES .....	viii
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Background to the Study .....	1
1.3 Problem Statement.....	10
1.4 General Objective .....	11
1.5 Specific Objective.....	12
1.6 Research Questions.....	12
1.7 Conceptual Framework .....	12
1.9 Scope of the Study .....	14
1.10 Significance of the Study .....	15
1.11 Justification of the Study.....	16
1.12 Operational Definitions .....	16
CHAPTER TWO .....	18
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	18
2.1 Introduction .....	18
2.2 Theoretical Review .....	18
2.3 Local Government Structure and Service delivery in Uganda.....	21
2.4 Decentralization Framework in Jinja District .....	23
2.5 Theoretical findings on the relationship between Decentralization and Public service delivery .....	25
2.5.1 Decentralized planning and public service delivery.....	25
2.5.2 Decentralized implementation and public service delivery .....	28
2.5.3 Decentralized monitoring and public service delivery .....	29
2.6 Summary of Literature Review .....	30



CHAPTER THREE.....	32
METHODOLOGY .....	32
3.1 Introduction .....	32
3.2. Research design .....	32
3.3 Study population.....	32
3.4. Determination of the Sample size.....	33
3.5 Sampling techniques and procedures.....	33
3.6. Data collection methods.....	34
3.7 Data collection instruments .....	35
3.8 Data quality control .....	35
3.8.1 Validity .....	35
3.8.2 Transferability.....	36
3.9 Data Analysis .....	36
3.10 Ethical considerations .....	37
CHAPTER FOUR.....	38
PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	38
4.1 Introduction .....	38
4.2 Response Rate .....	39
4.3 Service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties ..	39
4.4 Civil servants’ perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties .....	45
4.4.1 Problem Identification.....	45
4.4.2 Project Formulation.....	49
4.4.3 Resource Mobilization .....	52
4.5 Civil servants’ perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties.....	56
4.5.1 Implementation Approach and Service Delivery .....	57
4.5.2 Implementation Structures and Service Delivery .....	60
4.5.3 Decision Making Structures and Service Delivery .....	63

4.6 Civil servants' perception on decentralized monitoring and public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties .....	64
4.6.1 Data Management and Service Delivery .....	64
4.6.2 Accountability and Service Delivery .....	67
4.6.3 Transparency and service delivery .....	69
4.7 Summary .....	70
CHAPTER FIVE.....	72
SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	72
5.1 Introduction .....	72
5.2 Summary of the findings .....	72
5.2.1 Civil servants' perception on decentralized planning and public service delivery.....	73
5.2.2 Civil servants' perception on decentralized implementation and public service delivery .....	73
5.2.3 Civil servants' perception on decentralized monitoring on public service delivery.....	74
5.3 Conclusions .....	75
5.3.1 Civil servants' perception on decentralized planning and public service delivery.....	75
5.3.2 Civil servants' perception on decentralized implementation and public service delivery .....	75
5.3.3 Civil servants' perception on decentralized monitoring and public service delivery .....	76
5.4 Recommendations.....	76
5.5 Areas for further research.....	77
5.6 Limitations of the study .....	78
REFERENCES.....	79
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE .....	87
추상 .....	88

**LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES**

Table 3.1: Showing Sampling Techniques and Sample Representations of the Study..... 33

Figure 1.1 : Conceptual Framework 13

Figure 2.2: Theoretical Framework ..... 20

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Decentralization for long has been viewed to be a key strategy instrument for aiding to increase service delivery as well as the solving the needs of the locals in low developed states (Green, 2015, p.1). Other practical evidence proposes that decentralization permits local governments to answer well to local's desires than the central governments (Green, 2015, p.1). Article 176 (2) (b) of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (as altered) states that, "decentralization is a standard relating to every level of local government and, to be specific, from advanced to inferior local government divisions to certify public's involvement along with self-governing regulation in coming up with a decision." The research evaluated Civil Servants' perceptions on the relationship of decentralization and public service provision at local governments in Uganda with specific focus on Jinja district local government sub counties. Decentralization with the dimensions of decentralized planning; decentralized implementation and decentralized monitoring were the independent variable while Public service delivery with the indicators of accessibility, timeliness, quality and sustainability as the dependent variable. The chapter contains the background of the study, statement of the problem, conceptual framework, and scope of the study, significance and justification of the study concluded by working definitions.

### **1.2 Background to the Study**

Under colonial rule most of Uganda was governed by a system of British district commissioners. Under these commissioners chiefs held powers

over taxes, courts, local councils and general law and order. In the eastern and northern parts of Uganda which had no tradition of kingdoms or hierarchical leadership, the imposition of chiefs was alien and, while ruling under "customary" law, chiefs in such areas were actually closer to modern civil servants than traditional pre-colonial rulers.

The situation of administration was remarkably different in the five kingdoms of Ankole, Buganda, Busoga, Bunyoro and Toro in the southern and western part of the country, which had a long pre-colonial history of political hierarchy, in some cases dating back centuries (MOLG, 2012). Here the British instituted a system of indirect rule whereby local governments retained some similarities with the pre-colonial era, in particular in Buganda, the largest and most powerful of the kingdoms. In part, due to greater local legitimacy, the Buganda kingdom clashed with the central government in the 1950s over its degree of political independence and eventually requested to be granted a federal status in the country's future constitution. Concerns about a future civil war led the British Commissioner in charge of designing the post-colonial government to recommend a federal status for Buganda but only recommend a semi-federal status for the other kingdoms and a unitary system for the rest of the country because they were not as rich or large as Buganda, thereby creating a highly unequal system of local governance upon independence in 1962 (Ssalongo, 2011).

This arrangement continued for only four years after independence, in large part because the Buganda kingdom continued to clash with Milton Obote's national government in Kampala over its degree of political freedom. This time, however, the central government decided to send in troops rather than accede to the kingdom's demands, thereby leading to

exile of the king of Buganda and the dissolution of all kingdoms as local government entities (Green, 2015). The twenty years between the exile of King Muteesa in 1966 and the beginning of current President Yoweri Museveni's rule in 1986 were ones of autocratic and illegitimate local government due to the undemocratic and highly centralized nature of the national government. The 1967 Constitution not only completely dissolved all kingdoms' federal status but also took power away from the district assemblies and split the country into eighteen equal districts. The constitution also abolished all district land boards, placing their power in the Uganda Land Commission (Sathyamurthy 1986, pp. 440-441). Indeed, as Sathyamurthy (1986, p. 445) notes, "from the beginning, Obote regarded strong local governments... as obstacles in the way of forging a united Uganda according to his radical political philosophy."

The National Resistance Movement (NRM) came to power in 1986 and this was the peak of World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programs alongside its New Public Management reforms. Like in many of the African and Asian countries that had obtained political independence a few decades ago, the NRM immediately embarked on a decentralization path, starting with the election of Resistance Councils (RCs). Lubanga (1996: p.50) contends that, apart from serving as a political method of empowerment, decentralization was regarded as a policy aimed at improving local democracy, accountability, efficiency intra and inter-district equality, effectiveness and sustainability. Accordingly, the 1995 Constitution of Uganda and subsequently the 1997 Local Governments Act, gave impetus and legal backing for Decentralized Local Governance in Uganda. Article 176 (1) stipulates that: "The system of local government in Uganda shall be based on the district as a unit under which there shall

be such lower local governments and administrative units as parliament may by law provide”. Similarly Article 176 (2) b, specifies that “decentralization shall be the principle applying to all local government and in particular, from higher to lower local government units to ensure people’s participation and democratic control in decision making” (Uganda, 1995:117).

Decentralization in Uganda started way back with the signing of the African Native Authority Ordinance of 1919 when chiefs who were selected at village, sub-county then national levels came to an agreement (Titeca and Kristof, 2005). Decentralization in Uganda, was not a local political initiative, like the rest of the world, Uganda’s decentralization visibly came at a time when World Bank through Structural Adjustment programs embarked on Decentralization Policy in Africa, Asia and other parts of the world, with political and fiscal devolution (Martinez-Vazquez & Vaillacourt, 2011:1).

As a recipe on the New Public Management reforms menu, decentralization became a key concept to be adopted and followed in the developed and developing countries.

Mugabi (2004) noted that the constitution of Uganda at independence in 1962 introduced a decentralized policy management system as a hybrid of federalism, semi-federalism and unitary systems that gave federal eminence to kingdoms of Buganda, Ankole, Bunyoro, Toro, Busoga and also enabled Councils to be set up in districts of Acholi, Bugisu, Bukedi, Karamoja, Kigezi, Lango, Madi, Sebei, Teso as well as West Nile. In 1986, the importance of decentralization policy management was overemphasized and this led to the formation of resistance councils that

are known today as the Local Council (LCs) that provide platforms on which local leadership interact with local persons at different managerial stages (Mugabi, 2004).

Similar to the entire world, Uganda's regionalization emerged in a period when World Bank via Structural Adjustment programs adopted Decentralization Strategy in Africa, Asia along with other parts of the world, using political as well as economic decentralisation (Martinez-Vazquez and Vaillacourt, 2011). Uganda established decentralization via the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (as revised) supported later by the 1997 Local Government Act. Devolution was anticipated to increase the public's right of their involvement in the deciding procedures, so as to: weigh the service provision matters in regions of health, teaching, water as well as hygiene and others; help in growth of inhabitant's abilities; improve public's receptiveness, openness with immediate answerability in better public service provision (Kulumba, 2013).

Decentralization began in 1993 and culminated in the devolution of power to local authorities, subsequently accompanied by significant financial resources (Bukenya and Golooba-Mutebi, 2019). It was at a time when the orthodoxy of the Washington Consensus emphasized the importance of liberalizing developing countries' economies and democratizing their politics. Unlike governments that found donors reforms unpalatable and were therefore reluctant to implement, Uganda was different (Bukenya and Golooba-Mutebi, 2019). The NRM government had independently decided on the broad outlines of the reforms that it wanted to implement, entailing the reconfiguring of politics in general, and dispersing authority as well as responsibility from centers to local governments (Bukenya & Golooba-Mutebi, 2019).



Uganda started the decentralization procedure in 1997 after the establishment of Local Government Act, 1997. The basis was to upsurge allocative and fruitful effectiveness in service delivery (Nannyonjo & Okot, 2013). Devolution of service provision eases deciding as well as observing districts and low stages of local governments comprising of public contribution (Nannyonjo & Okot, 2013).

As a result, the District Local Governments (DLGs) were answerable for funds allotted plus observing the value of services delivered. It is believed that decentralized systems offer opportunities for increased beneficiaries' involvement in the direct decision making process in services prioritization, quality, cost and preferences. The rapid growth in the number of districts (from 34 in 1990 to 134 in 2019), many of which lack the human, financial and infrastructural capacity to operate effectively, is yet another case. One of its consequences is the emergence of weak, poorly led and poorly facilitated local governments whose capacity for delivering services to citizens is severely limited (Cammack et al., 2007 cited in Bukenya and Golooba-Mutebi, 2019). And the larger the number of districts, the further the capacity of the ministry to provide leadership and perform its supervisory functions is undermined (Golooba-Mutebi, 2012 cited in Bukenya and Golooba-Mutebi, 2019). This study assessed the perceptions of civil servants' on relationship between decentralization and service delivery in Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

Decentralization is a main plan for shifting duties from the state to local government stages of the state. It's an important alteration of the institutional framework in which political, social, plus monetary

judgments are arrived at. Rondinelli (1984) made different amidst diverse kinds of devolution; de-concentration is the shifting from central organizations working in capital cities to field bodies of these institutions; delegation is the shifting of service duty from central state bodies to specified establishments with some amount of working independence (semi-independent establishments or else local government units of the state); decentralization refers to the shifting from central government to independent entities of subnational with company status (entities having a constitutional or statutory base of authority which is different from central state); also privatization is the shifting of charge for generating goods or services to private charitable establishments or private businesses.

Devolution is the transfer of administrative authority such as planning, decision making and the collection of public revenues from the central government to provincial institutions, local governments, or federal units (Wagana, 2017). Lwanga (2016) noted that decentralization is broadly defined as ‘the transfer of public authority, resources, and personnel from the national level to sub-national jurisdictions’ and is normally viewed as falling into the political, administrative and fiscal spheres.

Devolution refers to shifting of managerial as well as political controls from the state to lower levels providing them with authority to decide (Wagana, 2017). Economic Devolution is a group of rules intended to upsurge incomes or monetary independence of local governments (Wagana, 2017).

Sub-national government is officially comprised of a district, municipal or city council, then local council committees (Lwanga, 2016). Local government is a product of devolution as a dimension of Decentralization

(Robson, 1937). Sub-national government is the portion of the entire state of the state or nation that is managed by specialists' answerable to the government powers, however appointed self-sufficiently from regulation by the government powers, by competent individuals occupier, or being with goods in some areas, which areas have been created by societies with shared intentions as well as shared past (Gomme, 1987). Meyer (1978) describes subnational governments to be locally elected serving elements in the similar elected method of the nation, that are lesser associates of the regime entrusted with set, measured, state authority with bases of revenue to offer definite native services also to grow, regulate as well as control the topographical, social then economic setting of distinct native part.

A public service is an item supplied or action which is taken that satisfies the desires of a big part of consumers. An operational public service is founded on action by the giver to comprehend desires of the consumers by giving data; goods as well as guidance that are custom-made to the definite desires of consumers (Uganda, 2015). Local service provision is the link amid strategy creators, goods suppliers, also customers of the goods, in addition includes services as well as their backup mechanisms (Uganda, 2015). Service provision is a system utilized by an institution to satisfy the desires and ambitions of the persons it is destined to help (Uganda, 2015). Local service provision is the delivery of social services, like drinkable water, decent roads, medical supply as well as energy, envisioned to improve people's distress by postponement and or improving the lifespan of the inhabitants (Wagana, 2017). The research will clearly present the perception of civil servants' on the relationship of decentralization on public service provision in Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

In Uganda the Decentralization strategy is directed by the Constitution, the Subnational Government Act (cap 243), Decentralization Policy Strategic Framework (DPSF), Fiscal Decentralization Strategy (FDS), Local Government Sector Strategic Plan (LGSSP), Public Sector Management Strategic Investment Plan (PSM-SIP) in addition to the National Development Plan (NDP). PSM-SIP summarizes planned organization as well as allocating funds in main planned parts of the state. The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) follows up the divisions. Planned state parts under PSM-SIP comprise of: Ministry of Local Government, subnational state Associations, subnational state Finance Commission, Ministry of Public Service, Public Service Commission, as well as the Kampala Capital City Authority (Uganda, 2013).

Service provision ethics were advanced in favor of the order of the Ministry of Local Government. The Ministry establishes subdivision strategies, organizes, observes, directs, oversees, guides then backs local governments in execution of devolution services (Uganda, 2015).

In the decentralization framework, the district, that is the main unit of subnational state, is accountable for main roles as well as services formerly done via the state. Subnational state are accountable for state services that contain primary health care, primary teaching, feeder road workings, water then hygiene as well as farming while the line offices offer the strategy guidance in a manner these decentralized services are executed (Tamale & Kitamirike, 2015). The district professional sections that in reality regulate the cost are the public service provision bodies of the subnational state. They are under the control of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) whose monetary answerability tasks mainly are with the state departments which regulate the provisional gifts (Tamale & Kitamirike, 2015).

The greatest regularly-cited challenge is the absence of capability at local stages of the state to practice accountability of public services. In Uganda, the lower levels of state do not have the capability to control state funds as well as uphold good bookkeeping processes. Other challenges comprise of few workers, income deficits, wastage as well as dishonesty, low fund allocation, compounded by inadequate local income collection (Green, 2015). For instance, medical service provision of current and past districts funding hasn't been amplified. Bird (2014) argues that a significant number of local governments do not have the administrative, managerial, monetary as well as official ability to satisfy the increasing desires of native citizens. Consequently, the local governments cannot satisfy their mandatory working ethics therefore affecting badly on service provision. As Onyach (2012), has shown, provincial governments of Uganda remain functioning at negligible staffing levels; some instances as low as 10% (Medical strike 2017) of the approved establishment. There is an immense unmet need for the more effective delivery of social services across Uganda, with vast segments of the population lacking adequate health and education services and basic infrastructure for clean water and sanitation (World Bank, 2013; Fiala & Premand, 2018). As asked by Lwanga (2016) "Is it an indication of failure of decentralization?" This study therefore presents the perception of civil servants' on relationship between decentralization and service delivery in Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Jinja District was one of the initial 27 districts decentralized in 1993/94 because of the establishment of the local governments (Resistance Councils) Decree, 1993, with the intention of improving service provision.

But, whereas the over-all aims of decentralization were to answer to native desires, the subsequent amount, value, production timing, availability and user's contentment of the services haven't met the native expectation. Current information indicates no development of social services or value for life for native societies (Ssonko, 2013). In reality, several pointers have either stayed similar or deteriorated. For instance, the big part of Uganda's populace still survives underneath the poverty line, with 25% surviving in total poverty (UBOS, 2017). Only three out of ten (27.4%) agricultural households in the district are employing modern agricultural practices; Nearly seven in ten households do not receive their full drug prescription when they visit a government hospital for medical treatment; access to piped water remains out of reach for the majority of households (Fiala & Premand, 2018). Despite these challenges to decentralized service delivery, there has been no rigorous empirical analysis and documentation of decentralization under the dimensions of planning, implementation, monitoring and their relationship with service provision in Uganda. This study aimed to fill this gap by investigating the perception of civil servants' on the relationship of decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

#### **1.4 General Objective**

This research investigated the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties in Uganda.

## **1.5 Specific Objective**

- i. To establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties.
- ii. To establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties.
- iii. To establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized monitoring on public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties.

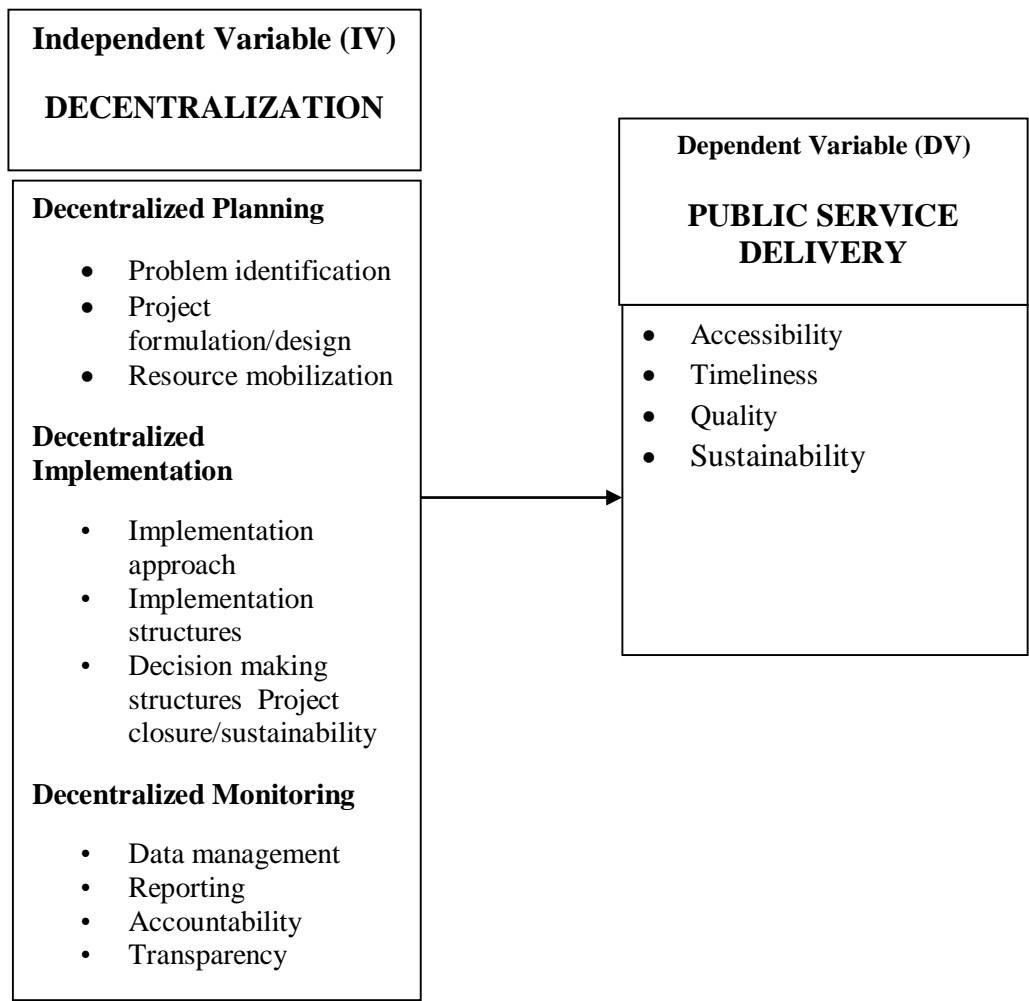
## **1.6 Research Questions**

- i. What is the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District Local government?
- ii. What is the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District Local government?
- iii. What is the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized monitoring and public service delivery in Jinja District Local government?

## **1.7 Conceptual Framework**

This study established the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties. The study's conceptual framework focused on the model shown in the Figure 1.1 below.

**Figure 1.1 : Conceptual Framework**



**Source:** Adapted from Ssonko (2013) and modified by the researcher

**Figure 1.1: showing the relationship between decentralization and public service delivery**

Figure 1.1 shows the relationships between decentralization and public service delivery where by perceived decentralization is in the dimensions of decentralized planning, decentralized implementation and decentralized monitoring is the independent variable while Public service delivery with



the indicators of accessibility, timeliness, quality and sustainability is the dependent variable. The conceptual framework shows that decentralization would work to contribute to Public service delivery positively or negatively.

## **1.9 Scope of the Study**

### **Geographical Scope**

The research was carried out at Sub County levels in Jinja District Local Government situated Eastern Uganda and in Busoga Region. The Jinja District Local Government was considered because Jinja District was one of the initial 27 districts decentralized in 1993/94 arising from the establishment of the subnational Governments (Resistance Councils) Decree, 1993, with the aim of better service delivery. However the study was specifically conducted in Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo sub counties because these have the highest population in the District.

### **Content Scope**

The study investigated the civil servants' perception on decentralization with the dimensions of decentralized planning; decentralized implementation and decentralized monitoring were the independent variable; decentralized planning were limited to Problem identification, project formulation/design and resource mobilization; decentralized implementation were limited to implementation approach, implementation structures and decision making structures Project closure/sustainability; decentralized monitoring were limited to data management, reporting, accountability and transparency as indicators. Public service delivery with the indicators of accessibility, timeliness, quality and sustainability were the dependent variable.

## **Time Scope**

This study collected data covering the period of 5 (five) years 2014 to 2019. The period of time period was preferred as it was within the same time period that sustainable development goals (SDGs) were set by the United Nations as a guide for development (Fiala & Premand, 2018).

### **1.10 Significance of the Study**

The research will be beneficial in a number of ways;-

The Ministry of Local Government shall be enlightened through the findings in this research about the areas in which they need to improve with regards to decentralized planning; decentralized implementation; decentralized monitoring and public service delivery alongside other public organizations such as the National Planning Authority can also apply the findings of this study to improve on service delivery.

The study findings shall be important to the many different Local Governments in Uganda through capacitating them to establish the relationship, which exists between decentralization and public service delivery and its effect on national development from the grass roots.

The findings will also be useful to policy makers like the Cabinet, Parliament of Uganda and the Ministry of Local Government who may use the findings to come up with policy reforms on decentralization and public service delivery.

Most importantly, the study findings shall be the basis for future academic research or knowledge which may require additional investigation on decentralization and public service delivery.

### **1.11 Justification of the Study**

Literature suggests that decentralization has not been an easy route to effective service delivery, as it involves complex processes that influence quality and coverage of services (Okwaroh, 2018). For example, there are occasions when roll-outs of decentralization programmes have faced rejection or resistance by sectorial/line ministries of national/central governments (Okwaroh, 2018). Despite these challenges to decentralized service delivery, there has been no rigorous empirical analysis and documentation of decentralization under the dimensions of planning, implementation, monitoring and their relationship with service delivery in Uganda. This study aims to cover this space in the works by investigating civil servants' perception on the relationship between decentralization and public service delivery with a bias to Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

### **1.12 Operational Definitions**

**Decentralization:** was used to refer to transferring responsibility for planning, implementation and monitoring of government programmes and projects from the central government to the local government levels.

**Decentralized planning:** was utilized to denote to the devolution of deciding and drafting of plans to local government from the central government.

**Decentralized implementation:** was used to refer to devolution of the translation of plans into practice and involves accomplishing and completing a plan to the local government.

**Decentralized monitoring:** was used to refer to devolution of provision of periodic information for tracking progress of implementation of programmes and projects according to previously approved plans, work schedules and targeted output to the local government.

**Public service delivery:** was used to refer to the delivery of communal services, like safe water provision, decent infrastructures, medical provision, good education as well as power to the local population by local governments.

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The chapter presents a review of current literature as written down in journals, schoolbooks, magazines, newspaper articles in addition to the internet, linked to decentralization and public service delivery. The chapter is structured under the headings of; Introduction, theoretical review, review of associated literature as well as summary of literature review, highlighting gaps that were established.

### **2.2 Theoretical Review**

The research was directed by the Public choice concept (Buchanan, 1985). Public choice theory deals with the problem of "public goods." Goods which a producer cannot "ration" or "market" and are therefore freely available to all consumers if provided to any, are considered to be "public goods." Public choice theory helps to explain why infrastructure (roads, bridges, safe water supplies, market facilities, schools, hospitals) is necessary for rural development. Public choice theory is useful in understanding the slow pace of rural development in the Third World. A simple "de-concentration" or "delegation" of functions to subordinate levels of a bureaucracy is unlikely to have these results (Wunsch, 1984). Public-Choice concept is based on the proposal that people's tastes for native public goods differ from area to area, since preferences as well as readiness to buy vary for topographical, ethnic and past motives (also that tastes in every area are rationally identical).

Specifically, semi-autonomous, sub-national political communities when dealing with practical areas appropriate public goods according to their

geographic and technical scales. They can help make rules and operating realities by providing structures of incentives and opportunities which reward local leadership for defining and integrating community needs, building coalitions around them; and which provide local leaders who will persuade individuals when information is incomplete that the risks and benefits of supporting a "public good" either by contribution or restraint are favorable to their interests.

They help make rules effective by allowing local conditions to guide, modify and undergird rules and programs which will provide and/or protect "public goods; help communities expand their rule making potential by providing experiences and incentives through which social learning can occur, which can be the basis for more enlightened, long-term, and community-oriented calculations of self-interest and rational behavior, and can define new areas where "public goods" might be provided (Brennan, Kliemt and Tollison, 2002).

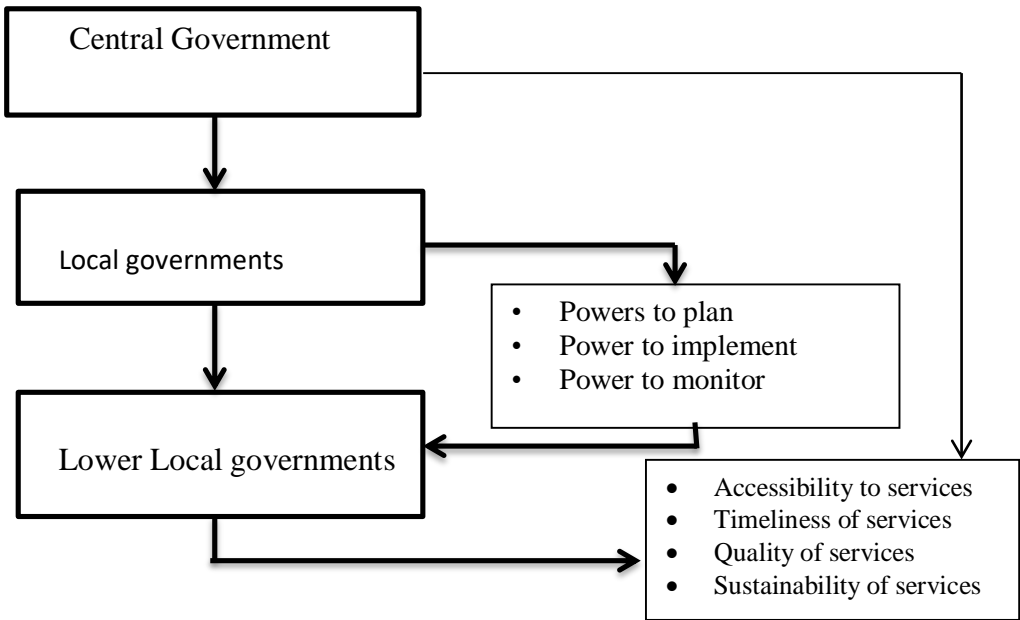
The Public choice theory that centralized delivery of natives public services, (if it inclines to be similar throughout the nation), is expected to satisfy no one. It consequently is said, that governments must simply give the goods which agree with native desires (Wunsch, 1984). It is claimed that decentralization decreased the item price of offering local goods as well as services. That it inclines to lessen item prices, via humbler provision processes as well as adding on present native funds, information, equipment as well as official abilities (Brennan, Kliemt and Tollison, 2002). Thus, from a 'public-choice' view, decentralization is a state where state services as well as goods are delivered via the exposed tastes of persons by market systems. So, the Public choice theory (Buchanan, 1985) will be utilized in investigating civil servants' perception on the

relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district Local Government sub counties in Uganda.

Decentralization of the authority over administering redistribution programs to local communities has recently become widespread in the developing world. These initiatives have transferred responsibility of procurement, selection of local projects, and identification of beneficiaries from central ministries to local governments or community representatives.

The presumed argument in favor of decentralizing delivery systems is that local governments will be subject to electoral pressures from local citizens, who are able to monitor delivery better than a distant central authority.

**Figure 2.2: Theoretical Framework**



**Source:** Adapted from Ssonko (2013); Wagana, Iravo, & Nzulwa (2015, p. 464) and modified by the researcher

The decentralization mechanism facilitates good governance. As a result, local governments and lower local governments are empowered to plan projects and activities; to implement; and to monitor projects and activities. There is a need for a decentralization system for productive efficiency at the local level. Subnational governments are closer to the people. Also, sub-national governments can assist in improving the efficiency of central governments. Over the past three decades, the new trend in governance has been the use of decentralization mechanisms in the provision of public services for many developed and developing countries (Shah & Thompson, 2004, pp. 1-2). The government is based on three governance levels for the fulfillment of its functions; the Central government with the major resource base, the Local governments and the Lower Local governments that are closer to the people and can easily relate with them to identify their pressing needs. (Eigeman, 2007). Most developing countries have primarily decentralized the resources and responsibilities needed to provide local governments with health and education services (Khemani, 2004). However, the delivered services such as education, health care, infrastructure, social welfare, sanitation, environmental protection, and waste management happen through all these layers.

### **2.3 Local Government Structure and Service delivery in Uganda**

The local government system in Uganda is based on the district as a unit, under which there are lower local governments and administrative units (Uganda, 1995). There are three main types of local government and these are: first; the local governments in a district rural area are, the district council and the sub county councils; secondly the local governments in a city are the city council and the city division councils; and thirdly the local



governments in a municipality are the municipal council and the municipal division councils (Uganda, 1997).

The Municipal Council is an equivalent of a county. Other lower local governments are: sub county and municipal division council local governments. Below this level are the parishes and the wards in rural and urban local governments respectively.

In Uganda, like many other developing countries embarked on decentralization for a democratic, participatory, decentralized local government system that could sustain development and deliver services efficiently and effectively to the people (MOLG, 2012). Besides transfer of power from center to districts, political control at local level, enhancing local economic development and improving local capacity in management of resources, decentralization policy in Uganda envisioned improvement in accountability and responsibility at the local level (MOLG, 2012).

Scholars have argued that, once a country decentralizes; there would be: a) responsive, b) efficient, and c) accountable governance at the local level. Despite these claims, most decentralization efforts end up without increasing the powers of local authorities. (Agrawal & Ribot, 1999:473-474).

One crucial issue of decentralization is that there has not yet been much real improvements of service delivery. The ultimate objective of decentralization is to reduce the persistent poverty in Uganda by improving the essential public services like health, education, transport and environmental management. However, this intention has not been fully realized. Generally, service providers, either health workers or teachers, claim that decentralization has brought better control over their resources, and this is one important reason

why civil service staff are supportive of decentralization. Yet, on the other hand, service receivers do not express that the services have greatly improved in recent years.

In Uganda challenges are reported in the media of how service delivery in many parts of the country is in a poor state. For instance, Jinja Municipal Council failed to provide essential services such as garbage collection (New Vision 19<sup>th</sup> Jan 2016). Despite decentralization's promise for more accountable government, results have been mixed at best. The literature on decentralization contains many examples where decentralization has not led to greater accountability (Venugopal & Yilmaz, 2010:1). In Uganda, some districts are reported to be performing better than others. Bukedea and Adjumani districts were for instance reported to be the best performing districts; while others performed poorly (Monitor, June 27<sup>th</sup> 2019). The question that we need to ask here is, why do some local governments have better accountability performance than others? This is the gap this study intends to address given that all the local governments in Uganda receive conditional and unconditional grants. This study in its focus will also look into why certain local governments are more accountable than others despite enjoying the same legislative mandate.

## **2.4 Decentralization Framework in Jinja District**

Jinja district government now consists of a District Local Council (LC-V), headed by its directly-elected chairperson, as its legislature, and the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and her staff as its executive branch. There is also a Resident District Commissioner (RDC) appointed by the President to handle matters of national importance, such as security, and to monitor the implementation of government programmes and projects. Former

central government departments that operated on the district level are now integrated units headed by the LC-V and supervised by the CAO.

Decentralization Policy, in Jinja district local Government has got an elaborate institutional framework. These include the Council, the Standing Committees, the Technical Planning Committees and Statutory Bodies. The latter include the District Service Commission (DSC), the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) the District Land Board (DLB) and the District Contracts Committees Committee.

Some departments and functions at the Local Government levels remained ‘abandoned’ and dysfunctional. These include the Community Development Office and all its constituent arms, the District Commercial Office, Entomology, Cooperatives (in some sub counties) and the Internal Audit. Some of these offices carried the critical mandate and role in driving decentralization, yet their capacity and operation remains sub-optimal.

The Human resource function in Jinja District Local government is partly controlled by the Central Government. The central government sets staff ceilings in Local Governments and also controls the wage bill. The framework provides for elaborate participatory structures and modalities. Nonetheless, their application and functionality varies from locality to locality in the district.

Citizen participation in monitoring Jinja local government programmes is very limited due to lack of appropriate information and being encouraged to participate appropriately.

At the district level, the key budget players are the councilors under a political umbrella with the role of passing the final budget and a mandate to either accept or decline a budget for a specified program. As

decentralization offers councilors powers in decision making, some of them are less educated and have less concern about developmental projects, always with preferences for projects of their own interests especially from which they can take some money for their own benefit at the expense of the citizens.

## **2.5 Theoretical findings on the relationship between Decentralization and Public service delivery**

In the research the literature was reviewed on decentralized planning, implementation, monitoring and their impact on service delivery as presented below;

### **2.5.1 Decentralized planning and public service delivery**

Decentralization brings deciding nearer to persons to increase working and provision of services (Wagana, 2017). Klaver and Tibamwenda 2009, investigated the impact of working decentralization on provision of services on Districts in Uganda. This research used bivariate regression analysis and moderated multiple regressions to analyze the association between governance decentralization dimensions, e-government, and service delivery variables. The discoveries showed that working decentralization had an important impact on provision of services in the local government. Exactly, this research established that monetary devolution, political devolution, managerial devolution, locals' contribution as well as social answerability actions entirely had optimistic followed by important impact on provision of services. The current research differs significantly from the reviewed study in various conceptual areas for example the reviewed study suffers from conceptual gaps since it measured decentralization from the multiple dimensions of

financial , political, administrative decentralization rather than from (planning, implementation, monitoring) as this study did.

Akinboade et al. (2013) studied legal resident contribution in preparation and district service delivery disapprovals. This research realized provision of service was anchored on the levels of criticisms that the municipality always received from the locals who were regarded as opinion leaders in society as indicated by the number services that were immediately provided. It meant small portion of inhabitant contribution in service delivery in particular local governments. Anjum (2016) investigated the relationship between district's adoption of decentralization and the ability of the municipal governments to provide right to simple goods like water as well as hygiene to its inhabitants. This study found that while the administrative planning decentralization framework centered on the idea of service provision, decentralization pursued in Mbale has brought government closer to the people though it has also placed heavy burdens on municipal institutions to provide services that they are ill-equipped to shoulder. However, the studies (Akinboade et al., 2013; and Anjum, 2016) focused on good approachability then disregarded more measures of providing services namely timeliness, value then sustainability.

In Gulu district within Uganda, Komakech (2014) assessed participating costing or planning mechanism with its relationship on improved contentment stages with public services. This investigation resolved that the degree by which residents contribute to the procedure of state policies are expected to affect the predictable paybacks of the decentralization of public service delivery. This study is also limited to the northern Uganda context hence difficult to generalize the research findings in other regions of the Country due to diverse political and cultural environment.

Goncalves (2014) investigated if the usage of inhabitant participating costing of municipalities throughout 1990–2004 impacted the design of municipal expenses also had slight influence on standards of living. This research established that municipalities employing participating costing helped in apportioning of state expenses which carefully met general tastes. Additionally, they established that municipalities directed a greater portion of the costs to saving in hygiene as well as medical goods that was followed by a decrease in newborn death levels. The researchers resolved that a very direct communication amid service consumers as well as chosen representatives in costing strategy could impact the way local funds are consumed as well as living condition consequences. The reviewed study was also done in western Uganda and hence difficult to generalize to other settings like Jinja District in Eastern Uganda.

Edzii (2017) examined decentralized educational planning policy by exploring meanings of decentralization and decentralized educational planning, the legal framework and how it has been implemented in practice at district level from the perspectives of key stakeholders. The study found that stakeholders have diverse understandings about the meaning of decentralization, and decentralized educational planning. In broad, it was found that decentralization entails empowering the districts/locals to make choices and being accountable for decisions made.

The study also found that School Management Committee/Parent Teachers Association members participate in the decentralized educational planning procedure but that their level of involvement is very low (Edzii, 2017). The study also notes that there is poor capacity development for planners and other stakeholders in a system of decentralized education planning. The low level of public contribution in choice making to execute learning

growth could result into letdown in planning (Edzii, 2017). The reviewed study is different from the current study in that Edzii (2017) focused on decentralized educational planning and service delivery not decentralized planning in general as this study did.

### **2.5.2 Decentralized implementation and public service delivery**

Monisola & Abe (2014) conducted research with a representative scope of one hundred participants studied the relationship between inhabitant contribution in implementation and service delivery. This research exposed that absence of contribution in implementation delays operational service delivery besides can also make a way of absence of openness along with answerability which is essential for effective usage of accessible resources to the advantage of persons of the community. This research was also limited to the to a different area in context hence difficult to generalize the research findings in other regions like Jinja due to diverse political and cultural environment.

Green (2010) conducted an investigation in Bugabula constituency in Kamuli district to scrutinize the effect of resident contribution on dispersed provision of services. With expressive study strategy plus a representative of 192 representatives, research exposed that allocative effectiveness has a helpful influence to dispersed supply of services. This study also focused on service approachability then disregarded extra measures of supplying services namely accessibility, timeliness, value as well as sustainability.

Emmanuel Oyuku Ocen (2008) employed cross-regional secondary information to measure the effect of straight civilian contribution in regionalized supply of services during 2002-2010 in Lira district. Effect of contribution was measured in relations to the way it impacts effective

distribution of funds; responsibility then decrease of dishonesty; plus, even supply of goods. Emmanuel Oyuku Ocen (2008) established that the contribution of inhabitants had been negligible, also, the subsequent effect on regionalized supply of goods was insignificant. The current research differs significantly from reviewed study in various conceptual areas for example the reviewed study suffers from conceptual gaps since it measured direct citizen participation in general rather than considering the indicators of planning, implementation, monitoring as this study did.

### **2.5.3 Decentralized monitoring and public service delivery**

Mezgebe (2013) assessed the dispersed supply of services in the Health Sector. The research employed an expressive review study design besides used qualitative as well as quantitative information styles, precisely semi - questionnaires, semi-structured meetings then emphasis crowd dialogue. The results of the research revealed that nevertheless decentralization contributed improved medical services accessibility, there were restrictions to warranty satisfactory mortal option, topographical approachability as well as sufficient pharmacological goods for improved medical supply of services to the community. Also, there was letdown of answerability in relative to observing, monetary preparation, reportage as well as execution of actions, the obtainability of directing processes for grievances, robust official ability in form of management, labor administration as well as monetary administration capability. This study also focused on Health service delivery and disregarded other forms of service provision namely education, agriculture, infrastructure and others yet the current study will focus on public service delivery in general.



Additional research by Nayak & Samanta (2014) scrutinized the outcome of public's contribution in monitoring (joining gatherings, rising voice, placing grievances while making suggestions) on public service delivery in Isingiro district. This research was founded on key domestic grass root study of 250 participants of the district of Isingiro in Uganda. The investigators showed that rising vocal sound while allowing participations in a good way impacted supply of services.

The existing literature on decentralization of the monitoring function and service delivery indicates that decentralization of monitoring to the local people can offer considerable advantages like greater efficiency in organization as well as effectiveness in apportioning funds, deeper inhabitant contribution, as well as improved responsibility systems, although there exists inadequate practical proof of optimistic consequences (Smoke 2015). Therefore, this research presents the Civil Servants perception on the relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

## **2.6 Summary of Literature Review**

Most of past practical research on decentralization and services delivery had been carried out in other districts and regions of Uganda (Smoke 2015; Nayak & Samanta, 2014; Muriu, 2014; Edzii, 2017). There exists moderately trivial amount of effort as well as endeavors to steadily study the facts about the relationship between decentralization and service delivery in Eastern Uganda (Muriu, 2014; Macharia et al., 2014). Specifically, the relationship between perceived decentralization under the dimensions of planning, implementation, monitoring and public service delivery in the perspective of Jinja district is barely discovered. This study

presents the relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The chapter presents the procedure which was followed in this research. This chapter covers the introduction, study design, the population of the research, coming up with the sample scope, as well as sampling methods and processes, information gathering techniques as well as tools, their validity and reliability, process of information gathering, analysis of information as well as measurement of variables.

### **3.2. Research design**

This research employed a cross sectional design used for a well-defined subject (Saunders et al., 2012, Neuman, 2009). It was based on survey design to collect information from the sample of the research population of a particular time (Amin 2005). In addition, given the limited duration within which the study is to be conducted, the researcher finds the cross sectional design more suitable (Neuman, 2009). Additional benefit is that it was more descriptive, cost effective, and the findings are not likely to be influenced as data was collected at a single point in time. This study employed a qualitative approach (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

### **3.3 Study population**

The population of the study was 24 respondents. Jinja District has 11 sub counties of which the level of decentralization is varied. The target populations of the study were 4 sub counties (at least 40%) including Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo Sub counties. At least each sub

county has at 45 technical staff members (Public servants) and from each sub county 5 public servants were chosen purposively giving rise to a study population of 20 respondents. However since the sub counties also constitute the local council members (Politicians), 4 local council chairpersons were included as key informants.

### 3.4. Determination of the Sample size

The sample size and selection for the research is presented in Table 1 below;

Table 3.1: Showing Sampling Techniques and Sample Representations of the Study

No	Category	Population	Sample	Sampling Technique
1	Local council Chairpersons	11	4	Purposive Sampling
	<b>Public Servants</b>			
2	Mafubira S/C	45	5	Purposive Sampling
3	Kakira S/C	45	5	Purposive Sampling
4	Busede S/C	45	5	Purposive Sampling
5	Budondo S/C	45	5	Purposive Sampling
<b>Total</b>		<b>185</b>	<b>24</b>	Purposive Sampling

**Source:** *Adapted from Jinja District Local Government Payroll verification report, 2018.*

### 3.5 Sampling techniques and procedures

Purposive sampling technique which is a non-probability sampling techniques was used for selection of respondents.

Here the chance that a particular case was selected for the sample depended on the subjective judgment of the researcher. As supported by Amin (2005), purposive sampling is regarded as favorable in selecting key informants who were more knowledgeable with what was going on in their areas of jurisdiction. On that ground, the study employed purposive sampling during the selection of key informants; these comprised the Local council Chairpersons in Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo Sub counties in Jinja District Local Government and Public servants in Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo Sub counties.

### **3.6. Data collection methods**

This study employed interview methods to gather information.

Interviews involve one on one encounter between the researcher and the respondents in order to obtain accurate and reliable data (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Therefore, the researcher interviewed Public servants in Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo Sub counties, the Local council Chairpersons in Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo Sub counties in Jinja District Local Government who were in position to provide the most reliable information. The interview guide was used by the researcher to provide in-depth data and also enable respondents to come up with other issues that were of interest to the matter under investigation.

The researcher gathered secondary information from documentary review for instance reading journals, dissertations, text books among others with an intention of establishing what other scholars wrote about the variables. Documentary review assisted the researcher to reconstruct the study variables and provided an in-depth analysis of different areas under study in comparison to the study area.

### **3.7 Data collection instruments**

This research used an interview guide and documentary check list.

Interview guide was used for key resourceful persons especially the Local council Chairpersons and Public servants in Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo Sub counties in Jinja District Local Government. The interview guide was used as a means to support and check the questionnaires instruments and interviews gave a chance for probing, hence being able to draw deeper information (Amin, 2005). The Interview guide was used to collect qualitative data for in-depth analysis of the study. This helped to standardize the interview situation and to get data necessary to satisfy the specific intents of the research.

Documentary evidence regarding the study was reviewed using check lists. The documents included performance reports, minutes among others. This was achieved by making use of check list to ensure that all the required information was collected.

### **3.8 Data quality control**

For a study to obtain appropriate data and produce accurate results there was need for ensuring quality of instruments through obtaining conformability, that was, the accuracy of the instruments and transferability, that was, dependability of the instruments as here under.

#### **3.8.1 Validity**

As defined by Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), validity refers to the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results. It is a degree to which results obtained from the analyses of data actually represents the phenomenon under study. The interview

guide was subjected to scrutiny by the researcher's supervisors and other research experts for validation purposes and it was found to be valid. In this study, during the interview guide construction, quality control and validity was ensured though.

Face validity, here the instrument was subjected to experts check whether it measures what it was intended to measure. Amin (2005) found that content validity focuses upon the extent to which an instrument corresponds to the theoretical concepts it is trying to measure. Furthermore, content validity was determined by the area covered by those who were asked to assess its content validity. Construct validity, which was maintained through restricting the questions to the conceptualization of the variables and ensuring that the indicators of a particular construct fall within the same construct. Data was synthesized, analyzed and reviewed to obtain insights and study conclusive information. This was partly because data coding or use of computers to analyze data was not done.

### **3.8.2 Transferability**

Transferability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). The data collection instrument was pretested on a two (2) of respondents from the population with the aim of ensuring that questions are accurate and clear in line with each objective of the study.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis using inductive and deductive reasoning. In order to determine whether the general aim of the research could be achieved or not, crucial questions were put forward to address the issue. Qualitative data was collected using interview guide and

secondary documents relating to decentralization and service delivery. Data was collected during the interview for presentation and discussion to complement the quantitative data and to highlight situations clearly for easy dissemination. Content analysis was used to test the authenticity of the information given by the respondents.

### **3.10 Ethical considerations**

The researcher sought permission to proceed to the field after clearance. The researcher then sought permission from Jinja Local Government District headquarters to conduct the research; then sought respondents' consent to conduct the study. Confidentiality was observed. The names of the respondents were not recorded on any of the documents rather codes were used in order to follow up on key information.



# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The researcher investigated the civil servants' perception on the relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties. Jinja district has most of its population in rural sub counties (Jinja rural), with a composition of 8 rural sub counties and 3 town councils, one municipality divided into 3 divisions. Jinja has 56 parishes and 399 villages. Of these, the researcher covered 2 rural sub counties and 2 sub counties with close proximity to town; Mafubira Sub County and Kakira town council, plus Jinja central division and 4 villages (Wairaka central, Mawoito, Wakitaka and Musima villages) of Busede and Budondo.

Key informant interviews are conducted with technical officers in the district, including chief administrative officers, heads of departments, clerks to councils, senior administrative secretaries (responsible for sub-counties), and service delivery unit heads. These interviews focus on collecting summary information on the status of service delivery and verifying the actions undertaken by the political actors during the financial year.

This chapter presents the study findings from in-depth interviews conducted with the various stakeholders in Jinja district Local Government

Sub counties. The chapter is structured along three specific study objectives, namely; to establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties; to establish civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties and to establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized monitoring on public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties.

## **4.2 Response Rate**

Out of a sample size of 24 people, 22 who constitute 92% of the sample managed to respond to the interviews while only 2 respondents who constitute 8% of the sample size were not in position to be interviewed. This lack of response from Jinja district local Government Sub counties staff may be attributed to factors like failure to get time due to their tight work schedules and other impasses that were beyond their control. This feedback from the respondents (92%) was enough to facilitate this study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999).

## **4.3 Service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties**

Service delivery is the implementation of services and making sure they reach those people and places they are intended to (Wakoli, 2013). Service delivery is about the customer appreciating what is being delivered, in other words, service delivery. Also refers to the actual output or results of an organization as measured against the intended goals or objectives. In this study, perceptions on service delivery were investigated under the indicators of quality of service, timeliness of service and customer

satisfaction.

#### **4.3.1 Quality of Service**

As far as the quality of service is concerned, there was an overwhelming response from participants that there were mixed feelings as some services were perceived as good and timely quality services while some respondents seemed dissatisfied with some services in Jinja district local Government Sub counties. One respondent said;

*“Delivery of primary education is a success story in our Sub County. Primary school enrolment boomed with the introduction of the government’s ambitious Universal Primary Education (UPE) programmes in 1997. More so, access to education by the poor has increased at a faster rate than in the rest of society. This is indicative of the success of the UPE in Jinja district; however the quality of education is ever declining which can be attributed to the people supposed to be monitoring the programmes to ensure that it continues to be a success.”* Interviewee 7 on 21/7/19

In agreement another respondent said

*“Service delivery in many parts of the district has slowly improved although at a snail’s pace but better than before where for instance, Kakira Town Council sometimes failed to provide simple essential services such as garbage collection though the situation is much better than before we had the powers to plan and decide which services to deliver. But we put much of the blame on the central government which always provides meagre resources that are also never in time. But we have managed with what we have as the situation is much better than before we had some powers to decide and direct resources to what needs pressed us most”* Interviewee 2 on 15/7/19.

This implies that the level of service delivery in terms of quality of services and timeliness of services by the Jinja district local Government Sub counties is perceived to be satisfactory to expectation by most Civil Servants but requires more effort. This finding concurs with the views of Ssalongo (2016) who noted that generally, service providers, either health workers or teachers, claim that decentralization has brought better control over their resources, and this is one important reason why civil service staff are supportive of decentralization, yet, on the other hand, service receivers do not express that the services have greatly improved in recent years (Ssalongo, 2016).

Although the ultimate objective of decentralization is to reduce the persistent poverty in Uganda by improving the essential public services like health, education, transport and environmental management, this intention has not been fully realized, the impact of decentralization on improving public service delivery is visible and much better than before its implementation though not satisfactory. Other participants expressed similar perceptions in regards to quality of services offered, for example a respondent added;

*“Here in our sub-county, health is another social priority that has been entrusted with resources to finance primary health care centers and hospitals. Unlike in the case of education, outcomes in the health sector are ambiguous. Some services have greatly improved, for instance maternal care is so good as many expectant mothers can easily access the health center IVs that have been introduced yet in some cases medicines are not available in the hospital pharmacies.” Interviewee 17 on 2/8/19*

However from observation, it was clear that in Jinja district, there were some local governments that seem to be performing better than others. Kakira and Bugembe Town councils are for instance seen to be better performing lower local governments generally in terms of service delivery in areas related to health, education, cabbage collection and security.

#### **4.3.2 Timeliness of Services**

Documentary evidence revealed that at Jinja district local Government there are complaints about timeliness of services in the complaints' register available opened 24<sup>th</sup> January 2012 with 9 to 11 complaints received monthly on delayed services and lack of customer care against local government officers and other staff. The records showed that even the time taken to address complaints was not immediate, at most two-three months. When asked on measures in place to ensure provision of quality timely services, several participants believed that there were no serious mechanisms in place to improve on timeliness of service delivery.

In addition an officer interviewed said;

*“There is little success of decentralization due to the central governments' failure to devolve more power and resources to the local levels”*

Interviewee 9 on 21/7/19.

There was an overwhelming consensus among the participants that the Jinja district local Government Sub counties were not doing enough to better service delivery. A respondent said;

*“Despite the few identified examples of successful service delivery in our district resulting from decentralization, there still remains a gap between*

*service provision and local needs. This gap is created by lack of adequate funding at the local level, and is largely reflected in the education and health sectors.” Interviewee 3 on 15/7/19.*

Such findings imply that the quality of services offered to the public by the sub Counties in Jinja district local government region are generally satisfactory and way better with decentralization but more needs to be done since the demand for more public services keep increasing and changing every day.

#### **4.3.3 Customer satisfaction**

Regarding customer satisfaction in service delivery, one respondent from Budondo indicated that;

*“Uganda’s decentralization process falls short of achieving its service delivery targets. He added that many reasons can be cited for this, such as the poor autonomy of the local governments, tight fiscal control by higher government and capacity constraints. To overcome these shortcomings the process of decentralization has to be properly sequenced. Public service delivery has to resonate with the needs of the poor and the accountability of local governments to local communities has to improve.”*

Other participants expressed similar perceptions in regards to mechanisms put in place to ensure provision of quality services by lower local governments in Jinja district, one respondent from Kakira Sub County remarked;

*“Much as transparency has generally improved since we are involved in planning and allocations of resources, however, transparency in the use of allocated resources and weak budgetary procedures with regard to*

*record-keeping and auditing is wanting. In education, for example, there was disproportionate distribution of finance to the schools, with the poor schools receiving less or nothing of the capitation grants. Parents and students have little or no information regarding the amount of the capitation grant entitled to them.” Interviewee 20 on 2/8/19*

Another respondent from Kakira Sub County added that;

*“It should be pointed out that the most daunting challenge facing decentralization as a framework for service delivery is a lack of capacity and personnel at sub-national government level to exercise responsibility for service delivery. The lower-level governments lack the ability to manage public finances and maintain proper accounting procedures.”*  
Interviewee 5 on 15/7/19.

The findings hereby imply that there was absence of a reasonable level of effectiveness in terms of service delivery in terms of quality of services, customer satisfaction, and timeliness of services served in the Jinja District. Such findings concur with the earlier literature on decentralization where decentralization has not led to greater accountability (Venugopal & Yilmaz, 2010).

One respondent from Mafubira Sub County noted that as a benefit of decentralization, the greater participation of women in politics is noteworthy. But this decentralization still has a long way to go before it can achieve the objectives of poverty reduction and enhance inclusiveness. The tight fiscal relationship between the levels of government has complicated the center’s role which is often construed by local authorities as interfering with the affairs of local governments. Upward accountability chains are in place and are stringent; however, there is a very little effort

on the part of the government to evolve a system of downward accountability to local people.

#### **4.4 Civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties**

The first objective of this study was to examine civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties. Therefore, this section explores findings on civil servants' perceptions which were investigated using interview questions. The findings are presented below;

##### **4.4.1 Problem Identification**

The researcher sought to find out whether problem identification was done collectively with the involvement of the local people at the grass root level in order to enhance better service delivery. There was an overwhelming response from participants in this study on how issues necessitating interventions were identified in Sub Counties of Jinja District local government, one respondent interviewed said;

*“In my view, there is improved governance in health-care provision in general because we can make decisions here. This is in spite of financial constraints necessitated by late disbursement of funds from the national government. At the Sub county level we are able to quickly make decisions on what priority health issues to focus on and to allocate these funds without the red tape that characterized the situation before decentralization. And of course sub county governments are much closer to the people and are therefore able to identify the real needs of their*



*communities.*” (In-depth interview on 16/7/19, Administrator, Budondo Health Centre IV)

Still on the relationship between planning and service delivery in Jinja district local government sub counties Uganda, there was an overwhelming consensus among the participants that joint problem identification with the involvement of the locals helped to improve service delivery. In confirmation, one participant said that;

*“ever since some aspects in planning were devolved to the sub counties and parishes, our local people for instance present roads, bridges, water sources, health centers and many other services points that they take as key priority areas and it is from this that the sub county councils start from in allocating the meager resources in their custody.”*

This is reported to be working quite well despite the resource limitations in terms of fund shortages. In agreement with the above finding, Anjum (2016) argued that while the administrative planning decentralization framework centered on the idea of politics, decentralization pursued in Uganda has brought government closer to the people though it has also placed heavy burdens on municipal institutions to provide services that they are ill-equipped to shoulder.

One Councilor stressed;

*“With decentralization, a local dispensary in my village has been improved and maternal health services introduced; hence, my people can secure prenatal services within my village on time. This is was only possible because members of Busede Town Council listened to the voices of my people who for long requested improvement of the health center in their area.”* Interviewee 11 on 18/7/19

Other participants expressed mixed perceptions in regards to the relationship between decentralized planning and service delivery in Jinja District. One the L3 Chairperson of Mafubira Town Council, who attends all of the Sub county council sessions indicated;

*“District government agencies are somewhat negligent even when it comes to informing lower local government councils about policy changes, changes in budget allocation, and other government information. District government agencies often fail to provide information to councilors even when they request it. Working materials of council sessions have long been unavailable to citizens hence greatly affecting our involvement in planning.”* Interviewee 16 on 17/7/19.

Such responses from respondents imply that local citizen participation in planning in the form of problem identification is possible and effective when there is enough information from the district government. Whenever such information has been reliably availed, the general perception indicates that service delivery has been positively impacted upon in the sub counties in terms of quality of services, customer satisfaction and timeliness of services in Jinja District local government sub counties and vice versa.

Several participants believed that their participation in identification of problems affecting their areas had helped to deliver quality services because they believed that resources would no longer be wasted in areas that could not benefit the local communities optimally. In Wairaka parish in Kakira sub county (Jinja District) a respondent noted that;

*“Bridges are in good conditions and they have eased the transportation services in the Sub County....We are excited about the many roads that are*

*in Kakira now compared to the years back and we appreciate government for that great job as for most of the things we highlight here in our meetings as our real problems are the ones that the Council takes as priority unlike the years before when roads that connected many villages to the city were not maintained because bridge which was not required was being built.”*

Interviewee 22 on 3/8/19

Such findings imply that decentralized planning enables local people to participate in the entire planning for services. This means that people at the grass roots are able to get the real services that they need because of their involvement, leading to efficiency and effectiveness in terms of customer satisfaction and timeliness of services in Jinja District local government sub counties.

Still in confirmation, other participants expressed different perceptions in regards to how decentralized planning affects service delivery in Jinja District. In Busede sub county many respondents reported that their roads have improved over time mainly because of voluntary community service on the roads done by the members of their community. One female elderly civil servant indicated that;

*“In Busede, roads are in good shape and also in the village areas. This is attributed to the bill that was passed in district council where community members should do “bulungi bwansi” on all roads in their respective areas.... We have managed to involve citizens to actively involve themselves in “Bulungi bwansi” to better up the town council roads.”*

Interviewee 12 on 18/6/19

*“On the other side, however, in the other parts of the district where the local people do get involved in planning and implementation, roads lack maintenance, are bushy, very narrow, impassable, and some communities do not have any access roads.”*

The findings on decentralized planning and service delivery indicate or show that decentralized planning if well implemented would yield adequate effectiveness and improve the level of service delivery in the Jinja District. It can be concluded that the more effective involvement of local community members in problem identification, the more empowered the community members are in discussing customer needs and hence the better the lower local governments are placed as far as service delivery is concerned as seen in sub counties in Jinja district.

#### **4.4.2 Project Formulation**

The study further sought to find out whether decentralization of the project formulation function empowers lower local government employees to offer better service delivery. There was an overwhelming response from participants in this study about decentralization of the project formulation in Jinja District, Several participants believed that let alone other levels of local government but project formulation at the lower local government is almost not existent. On this, one of the District Official interviewed said;

*“There is still a long way to go. Many things are left on paper but actual activities are not happening as they should. This is affected by staffing. There are few officers to follow the LLGs to ensure that activities are implemented.”* District Official, Jinja. Interviewee 19 on 23/7/19

Such a finding implies that in some cases project formulation at lower local government was not possible. This means that gaps are felt in cases where projects are simply designed from above and executed in the lower local governments without participation of the local people. This could lead to local government becoming inefficient and ineffective in terms of services offered by the lower local governments in Jinja District.

When asked about their perceptions on how decentralized project formulation impacts service delivery at lower local government in Jinja district, there was an overwhelming response from participants in this study that decentralization of the project formulation function if properly handled improves service delivery. On the same, one Town clerk interviewed said;

*“Uganda has had 22 years of decentralization and it has been a learning journey. The LG Act has been amended a record 13 times, the latest being September 2015.”* Jinja District official interviewed on 24/7/19.

In agreement, another one respondent interviewed said;

*“Tensions between administrative staff and politicians in the district are the consequence of the different kinds of legitimacy they invoke for their choices and decisions. Nominated technocratic and administrative personnel such as the Resident District Commissioner (RDC), the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), and the DEO generally base their decisions on national laws and guidelines as well as on professional information, whereas local politicians (notably the District Chairperson (DCP) are elected officials and have legitimate claims to represent their constituencies.”* Interviewee 14 on 18/7/19

Such a finding implies that decentralization of formulation of projects may

not improve on service delivery because the general perception of respondents is that the issue of projects is highly politicized by all the parties which negatively affect the quality of projects and their deliverables offered to public by the lower local governments.

Another respondent said;

*“The major service delivery challenges in our district include corruption among civil servants, most especially in works; the turnover rate of Sub county chiefs and town clerks; inadequate staffing; limited facilitation for supervision and monitoring; limited participation in sub-county council meetings; failure to follow up on service delivery concerns raised in monitoring reports; and, budget cuts by central government.”* Interviewee 1 on 14/7/19

Similarly one of the sub county official expressed similar perceptions in regards to decentralization of planning when she said;

*“The weak institutional and human resource capacities have compromised service delivery especially in the health sector; it has affected the procurement, distribution and use of medicines”.* Interviewee 10 on 17/6/19.

Such are indications that decentralization of planning function to sub counties has not got serious impact on the performance of the lower local governments which is likely to affect the level of service delivery in terms of quality of services, customer satisfaction and timeliness of services.

Of the respondents interviewed, 65% did agree that the district councilors supposed to pass the final projects and budgets were not competent

enough, and that many of them only valued projects that profited them financially than those that benefited community.

Basing on the study findings which show an overall agreement among the participants in regards to the relationship between decentralization of planning and service delivery, it is clear that the sub counties in Jinja are perceived to be struggling as regards planning of projects due to the challenges discussed above.

#### **4.4.3 Resource Mobilization**

The researcher further sought to find out whether decentralization of planning in terms resource mobilization empowers local government employees to offer better service delivery. The study findings revealed that resource mobilization was practiced in Jinja District local government. For instance there, was an overwhelming response from participants in this study that resource mobilization is carried out though with challenges as indicated by one respondent that;

*“We can hire grade three (primary school teacher) teachers, we also perform internal audit of our schools, handle budgets, accounts etc. As it may seem, in reality, we are not fully empowered. Rather than decentralizing authority down the hierarchy, only minimal powers have been accorded to us as far as financial powers are concerned, we are more autonomous such as I am fully empowered in resource allocation. I distributed Shs 2.5 billion among my schools. The district government system has brought more financial resources which have enhanced the quality of education. Our internal capacity though in mobilizing our own resources through done agencies on the hand has greatly improved our service delivery. We are able to deal with donors directly unlike when we*

*had to wait for the central governments to allocate donor projects to our communities. Several community based projects have sprung up because of the same. Our ability to mobilize local revenues through local taxes have also improved service delivery”* (Interviewee 5- District Education Officer).

Such a finding implies that lower level governments in Jinja district still face a number of related challenges that affect service delivery in terms of quality of services, customer satisfaction and timeliness of services by the local governments which would likely to stale or to improve at a snail’s pace. However based on their ability to mobilize local resources public service delivery has greatly improved and there is a noticeable change before and after the implementation of decentralization.

There was overall agreement among the participants in regards to resource mobilization and service delivery in the local Sub Counties, a respondent positively said;

*“Now if we need funds, we can get approval from the district government, otherwise it took months to get funds from the central government. Funds are now allocated to us and as a category 2 officer; I can fully utilize these funds according to the needs areas.”* Interviewee 10 on 17/7/19.

This implies that decentralization of resource mobilization as a form of decentralized planning has had a positive impact in terms of easing the works such as road repairs, garbage collection in the local governments mainly due to the local revenues. This is likely to improve on the level of service delivery in terms of quality of services, customer satisfaction and timeliness of services.



One process server interviewed expressed similar perceptions in regards to resource mobilization in the sub counties in Jinja district. A case in point of this was given by one town clerk about a rural school in Kakira town council that needed to be fenced off to reduce the theft of school property, land inclusive. The local government felt it was not their role but that of the central government, and so did the central government through the Ministry of Education and Sports. This created tension between the two tiers given the fact that the school has a very big pupil enrolment within the district.

However, on the contrary when asked whether this form of decentralized planning affects service delivery, the respondent interviewed said;

*“This year we wanted it to be the budget of the citizens, so we presented the draft budget to the citizens. However, citizens have more needs than we can realistically satisfy. It turns out that the debate does not make much sense and is not justified because people discuss it, but when it comes to deciding, we have to do what we have to do. Priorities must be covered. It is good that citizens tell us what they think about the budget, but realistically, they do not have much influence. We can shout slogans and tell stories, but citizens do not have much influence on the budget. The budget is limited by available funds and priorities. When those are satisfied, little remains to be influenced by the citizens.”* The secretary of the council, Bugembe TC interviewed on 8/8/19.

In agreement with the above, one respondent noted;

*“Uganda currently has a complex decentralized system; for example the health system consists of the district health infrastructure consisting of Village Health Teams/Health Centre I (VHTs or HC Is), HCs II, III and IV*

*plus general district hospitals. Beyond the district, the health system has Regional Referral Hospitals and National Referral Hospitals. Such a complex system calls for proper coordination, support supervision, inspection and resource mobilization.” Interviewee 10 on 17/7/19*

Still in agreement with the above finding, another respondent interviewed said;

*“Devolved powers under the decentralized planning have come along with the opportunity of abusing them through the interplay of corruption and service delivery. This kind of power abuse and struggle has made many district leaders feel it is alright to dip their hands in public purse for their own private use, let alone the less involvement and participation of the local communities/citizens in programmes and policies that are meant to impact on communities. Leaders both at the higher local government and central government usually connive and work together to implement programmes that will give them an opportunity to have a lion’s share.”*

Interviewee 1 on 14/7/19

Such findings imply that decentralized resource mobilization may not enable timeliness of services offered by lower local governments. This means that decentralized resource mobilization may leave gaps that may be felt leading to inefficiency that may affect service delivery negatively in terms of customer satisfaction and number of clients served by lower local governments in Jinja District.

In addition one District Education Officer interviewed expressed similar perceptions as he said;

*“There are sub-counties in Jinja district that have never reported more than 5 first grades in primary leaving examinations yet the highest*

*enrolment in UPE is in rural Uganda. This is mainly due negligence by the local leaders in terms of planning and mobilizing sufficient resources necessary to support schools in their areas. Secondly, there is a general decline in performance in rural primary schools of Uganda despite the high enrolment due to delayed release of UPE funds and other resources from the local governments to these rural areas despite the early release of funds from MoES.” However UPE through decentralization has seen the number of pupils in schools reach 81,582 as per last statistics provided by Jinja District Local Government in 2014.*

These findings imply therefore that the decentralization of the resource mobilization function to the lower local governments is perceived as a major challenge to some sub counties and taken to be the main cause of the service delivery challenges experienced. However, the power to mobilize their own resources on the other hand has greatly improved service delivery as indicated in the findings from the civil servants that were interviewed despite the challenges that have come with it.

#### **4.5 Civil servants’ perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties**

The second objective of this study was to examine civil servants’ perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties. Therefore, this section explores findings on decentralized implementation which was investigated using interview questions focusing on implementation approach, implementation structure and decision structure

as dimensions of decentralized implementation as practiced by lower local governments in Jinja District and their effect on service delivery.

#### **4.5.1 Implementation Approach and Service Delivery**

When asked about how they implement plans and how this affects service delivery in the lower local governments in Jinja district; one respondent said

*“I am partially empowered. If I want to take any action against those who are not performing well, I will start getting pressure from the top. Therefore I will not be able to take any action. We are like puppets in the hands of our superiors.”* Interviewee 14 on 18/7/19

Hence, this means that there is shortage of room for implementation by local government officials which is likely to affect service delivery negatively. These findings concur with Monisola & Abe (2014) who wrote that absence of contribution in implementation delays operational service delivery, besides, can also make a way of absence of openness as well as answerability which is essential for effective usage of accessible resources to the advantage of persons of the community.

Investigation and examination of documents revealed that Decentralized health services can only be better availed when there is: (a) adequate financing (for staff, drugs, and equipment); (b) clear performance measurements (e.g. at the level of health units and districts); (c) proper information flows (hence the importance of the health management information systems (HMIS); and (d) effective supervision, inspection and enforcement of performance standards by Ministry of Health, the District Health Officer, local politicians, the health unit management committees (HUMCs) or even the police (as in situations where medicines or PHC

funds are stolen). In cases or sub counties where all or most of the accountability variables work well, satisfactory services are provided. Where all or most of these factors are lacking, poor services are found and will be costlier as a result of multiple administrative units. (Green 2008:4)

In regard to health the statistics presented in 2014 showed that the number of households accessing the nearest health facility within a distance of 5km stood at 3,541 and for public health facilities stood at 7,375, a clear indication that decentralization was positively creating an impact.

Additional documentary reviews revealed that there were training workshops for local leaders on decentralization for three days; Training on the implementation of budget in 2012; Training on customer care; Achievements of the community service program; Training on the implementation of procurement guidelines in 2015. This means that training of local leaders was identified as part of the implementation structure which is likely to result into improved service delivery.

Still regarding implementation structure and service delivery, one respondent said

*“In Mafubira sub county, community members and local government officials have sometimes been summoned by the higher local governments to be presented with accountability on what funds are planned for UPE, how much is received, expenditures and deficits therein which makes the current UPE system clearer as far as resource allocation is concerned for effective quality education.”* Interviewee 19 on 23/8/19

In agreement, a respondent had this to say; *“The involvement of the community varies from area to area, as people who are well educated are actively involved, and in remote areas where literacy is very low, people*

*are less active.*” Interviewee 2 on 15/7/19.

In addition, the respondent emphasized that decentralized implementation has helped reduce on the cases of mismanagement in some cases. A respondent from Kakira Town Council said

*“The community is very active since decentralization such as in school councils. However, it varies from area to area. Urban and rural areas have a different environment. In rural areas, due to the lack of education and awareness among the community regarding their role in the school council, school councils are not very active. Generally, in these areas control remains with the head of the institutions. In urban areas school councils help schools in finances plus moral support.”* Interviewee 12 on 18/7/19

Furthermore, documentary reviews and synthesis revealed that there were implementation reports filed on several projects in Kakira Town Council for the year 2015/2016.

One of local leader, noted that;

*“Putting more emphasis on implementation with full participation of community members has led to improved service delivery in terms of timely delivery, improved customer care, reduced complaints and so many other achievements”.* A local politician in Bugembe Town Council however narrated that;

*“Even with decentralization, political factors considerably affect our performance. For example, if we want to transfer a worker, or appoint someone, a reference will come from the top to stop it. There is favoritism in the transfers and appointments of public servants. Bureaucracy also*

*hinders our performance by favoring their likes and dislikes.” Interviewee 22 on 03/8/19*

Another interviewee added:

*“The most influencing factor is the political interference. The provision of facilities is not being done on a needs basis. For example, one community already has a tube well and the political representatives will insist on having another in that community where it is needed or not at all. We cannot transfer even one person, because if we do, we are being approached from the top not to do so. The system’s main drawback is that it works on references from very well connected people.” (Interviewee-6 on 16/7/19)*

These findings imply therefore that the Jinja district lower local governments grapples with finding a proper implementation approach that matches its decentralization framework which is likely to negatively affect service delivery at the grass root level.

#### **4.5.2 Implementation Structures and Service Delivery**

Through the interviews the views of the respondents were recorded. The perception out there is that decentralization has been a magic bullet to all that ails public services owing to the fact that it was under the decentralization arrangement that the lower and higher local governments were established. This perception is mainly spearheaded by the Sub county governments. One respondent said

*“Decentralization has brought services closer to the people but worsened some aspects of services. For example, the capacity of our health facility has not been expanded to meet the increased referral maternal health-care*

*demand that has been occasioned by free maternal health care policy.”*  
(Administrator, Budondo Health Centre IV on 16/7/19)

For health services, decentralization has brought in place District Health Committees, Sub County, Parish and up to Village health teams. However, there is a general widespread notion that services are not free and poor in the health facilities run by the counties.

However, from observation not many respondents seemed to have knowledge that the services were poor. This has resulted into citizens complaining constantly about the services. In confirmation of this finding, one respondent when asked whether she was satisfied with the decentralization implementation structures, had this to say;

*“Before decentralization, there were no funds at the local level; so ambulances were rare. And you see we in the Sub county health departments can now make decisions on whether to buy ambulances and how to use and maintain them. Ambulances are now available 24hrs”*  
Interviewee 16 on 17/7/19

Hence, this implies that even when there are still challenges in service delivery due to several challenges, the decentralization strategy or arrangement is appreciated by the local population.

Still on whether decentralized implementation structures have improved service delivery, one respondent said;

*“After decentralization, education allocations, for example, often do not reach intended schools, and health allocations were reduced considerably*



*when districts were empowered to form their own budgets.” Interviewee 11 on 18/7/19*

This suggests that service delivery is likely to be negatively affected in these areas.

When a respondent asked about availability of staff at lower local governments said;

*“As far as different local government levels are concerned, the stock of human capital is generally lower in lower levels. Very often, this makes higher levels hesitant to transfer resources downwards, as they do not trust in the ability of lower levels to use their resources efficiently and to account for the funds they receive but fortunately with the limited staff, the sub counties have done tremendously well. Look at our performance here in Budondo, it speaks for itself.” Interviewee 19 on 23/7/19*

In confirmation of this finding related to staffing, a staff of Kakira Town Council said;

*“Delays and inconsistencies in the planning and budgeting as well as poor service delivery are prevalent in many local governments. Staffing structures and levels are partly inadequate, as they were not co-aligned with the devolution of functions and responsibilities similar to the case of revenue assignments.” Interviewee 12 on 18/7/19*

The findings therefore indicate that the general perception was that the decentralization of implementation to the local governments has to a great extent improved the level of service delivery however there are still a number of challenges that need to be streamlined to enable the decentralization framework function very well and this rotates around

provision of sufficient resources ranging from human, financial, infrastructural and so much more.

#### **4.5.3 Decision Making Structures and Service Delivery**

From the documents reviewed, Uganda's decentralization system functions through a unified set of elected authorities grounded at the district level (mainly planning and budgeting responsibility) and four lower government and administrative levels with more modest responsibilities. The district (LC5), sub-county (LC3), and village (LC1) councils are elected by universal adult suffrage, with county (LC4) and parish (LC2) levels elected indirectly or appointed ex-officio. District/city councils and sub-county councils (municipal divisions and town councils in urban areas) are corporate bodies and accounting levels. County councils (municipal councils and city divisions in urban areas), parishes (urban wards), and villages (urban cells) are administrative units. The NRM government has worked hard toward establishing a decentralized system to ease delivery of services which has been applauded by the citizens. (Golooba-Mutebi, 1999, pp105, 109). It was found that decisions relating to delivery of services are made at these levels. In agreement, a respondent said;

*“Ideally at every level of government, the decentralization policy has given enough powers to make decisions without interference from above, however in reality the case is quite different; there are some decisions that cannot be made at sub counties and even if they are made, they can be over turned at higher levels.”* Interviewee 16 on 17/7/19

This finding means that in some cases the decentralization of the decision making function to lower local governments is pseudo in nature, thus perceived to negatively affect service delivery.

Another respondent said;

*“We as politicians know that the Government initiated programs such as UPE for a right cause to benefit the local citizen, but decentralizing it was for political reasons for communities to think UPE is owned by the people yet the government still has total control over UPE. The current government is using this method as a political machine.”* Interviewee 14 on 18/7/19

This means that the level of decentralization of the decision making function is not leading to real results as they are intended but for hidden agendas.

#### **4.6 Civil servants’ perception on decentralized monitoring and public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties**

It was found that following the decentralization of powers to local governments under the decentralization system, local governments became an avenue to bring basic public services closer to the grassroots. Basic public services prioritized at the national level include: health, education, water and sanitation, agriculture and roads. By implication, therefore, local governments are held accountable for the quality of services in these key areas which, in effect reflects the overall performance of a local government at any one point in time.

##### **4.6.1 Data Management and Service Delivery**

Through the interviews conducted, interviewees 1, 4, 8, 9 & 22 in Musima

village, Mafubira Sub County asserted that;

*“...engagement of local community members in the monitoring of government program in Sub counties has enhanced transparency, community harmony, effective and efficient financial accountability even at the limited level it has been taking place”*. This implies that as a result of decentralization, there is community involvement in the monitoring function which has had a positive impact on service delivery in the sub counties. This correlates with Mezgebe (2013) who observed that decentralization with the local community armed with the monitoring arm contributed to improved medical services accessibility; there were restrictions to warranty satisfactory mortal option, topographical approachability as well as sufficient pharmacological goods for improved medical supply of services to the community.

On the contrary, in Buwenge Town Council, Interviewees 1, 2, 17 & 20 indicated that;

*“All public officers are perceived as being corrupt, fraudsters, embezzlers, window dressers, not transparent and they believe that financial statements are presented with material misstatements, thus forcing the public not to rely on them even if they are independently reviewed and acknowledged with qualified opinions.”* This perception is so because of non-involvement of the local population sometimes, although the perception is changing as more and more involvement of the local community in managing their affairs is changing their perception towards the activities of the local governments. Weekly debates and talk shows concerning the management of the activities that are directed towards delivery of public services are held on popular radio stations and the local

community are encouraged to call and air their opinions. This as a result of decentralization has greatly improved transparency and accountability in the sub counties in Jinja district local government.

In Namulesa Parish, Mafubira Sub County, a discussant reported that:

*“Initially we never had Baraza meetings and since then we have had several Baraza meetings though it was not mainly at the sub-county level though this has now been brought down to the sub county levels. Here we have different government workers like health workers, security people, who are tasked with responding to questions raised by community members on ongoing activities and educate the community about new programmes that would benefit the community. I think it was initiated a couple of years ago, remarked the respondent.”* Interviewee 19 on 23/7/19

This finding means that in some lower local government’s community members’ participation in monitoring had been long dropped before the introduction of decentralization, but after its inception service delivery has been enhanced with the monitoring arm of the local population strengthened though it has come with a challenge as noted by Emmanuel Oyuku (2008) because of inadequate funding from the central government.

In Musima Parish, Mafubira Sub County, the chairperson of the SMC at Musima primary school put it clear that;

*“The central government has given them a voice in the locality and can influence change by encouraging more children to attend school and proper rules for good governance at the school level. However, this is at school level and usually involves a few of the parents in decision making*

*since the higher local government usually gives us directives on what is to be done or implemented. With the inception of decentralization, the number of Parents-Teacher Association meetings are tripled over the year to aid in decision making regarding how schools should be run to benefit the community.” Interviewee 12 on 18/7/19*

This indicates that the much as the higher local government has the upper hand at district level in the current UPE under decentralization, there has been more involvement on the part of the local communities thereby creating more ownership of the system by the local community which has greatly impacted on quality education, especially rural Uganda.

#### **4.6.2 Accountability and Service Delivery**

On accountability and service delivery, interviewee 21 &22 asserted that;

*“Adoption of the Public Financial Management Local Government Framework 2015 in the allocation of resources has significantly improved transparency and preparation of accountability hence influencing the level of financial accountability at the lower local governments.” Interviewee 4, 3, 5, 7, 11, 20 added that “...the strong internal controls through conducive control environment to meet set objectives, assessment of risk, information and communication, monitoring and control activities led to effective and efficient financial accountability.” This means that to some degree the decentralization of the monitoring roles has to a proportional level resulted into improvement in service delivery.*

Interviewees 1, 5, 6, 20, 21 & 22, accepted that financial accountability is done monthly together with the interim/ mid-way audit of financial reports

followed by annual audit at sub counties as requirement for public entities. However, interviewee 3, 5,6,7,9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 19 & 22, were quick to bring to notice that;

*“...the partisan politics at the district and sub county levels has induced selfishness where accountable officers swindle resources to the benefit of their political wing benefits other than the local government suggested programs and distort the documentation with support from more knowledgeable individuals whom they hire from outside the local governments, thus indicate poor financial accountability.”* Such is a common occurrence in most local governments in Uganda to the detriment of service delivery. As noted by Nalugo 2008, corruption is the biggest load that local governments in Uganda are facing as a bottleneck to effective and efficient service delivery.

In Bugembe Town Council, interviewee No 8, 9, 10, 12 &15 asserted that;

*“The district funding is inadequate to meet its budget which lead to poor financial accountability, delayed the service delivery as resources are misallocated to suit immediate district needs. The major source of local governments funding are conditional grants from the central government which constitute approximately 90% of the total annual funds.”*

Most of these districts are created as a reward for votes for the sitting political party while disguising it as a tool to bring services close to the local community. (Nalugo, 2008)

According to one respondent; *“the Government decided to decentralize because the center had failed to perform as expected hence the need to engage the local communities so as to create ownership of government programs.”*

The implication would be that the decentralization arrangement is perceived to improve service delivery in Jinja District local government. But in addition, the LC3 chairperson of Mafubira Sub County reported that; *“there is no political will for a developed and quality service delivery system in Uganda since decentralization is a political initiative, and it is only aimed at keeping the current ruling national resistance movement (NRM) in power,”* in line with assertions of Nalugo 2008.

As a result of decentralization of the monitoring function, most of the time there is conflict of interest among parties and at time divided loyalties. One head teacher reported a scenario where the lower local government expected him to approach a school challenge based on their demands while the higher local government expected him to follow their directives too. This is likely to negatively affect service delivery because it presents the decentralized system as a liability to communities and schools in rural with poor quality education and less accountability from the local government.

#### **4.6.3 Transparency and service delivery**

The majority of district officials interviewed characterized community involvement as a must. In this regard, an Interviewee stated that:

*“For services like education, most schools organize meetings with the community. Most of them do it at the end of the year, they mobilize all the parents of the children to come to the school. They normally do it when they want to benefit from government, like maybe they want construction of teacher’s houses something like that, then after that, that’s when government comes on board to implement what they have decided on. If it is teacher’s houses, you prioritize that one, if it is maybe buying text books, you prioritize according to what the parents have agreed upon in the*



*meeting. Even after taking those things to the school, you still call a community meeting. So those meetings are the ones that will always handle such things.*” Interviewee 10 on 17/7/19, this means that service delivery is likely to be better; in agreement another respondent observed that;

*“Financial transparency has improved as there is the technical staff and the politicians to make it more transparent. In the system prior to decentralization, only the technical people were responsible for the accountability of the entire system, now the sharing of accountability at the district and sub county level has made it more transparent.”*  
(Interviewee 1)

However, some lower local governments in Jinja District proved that weak inspection or monitoring was a top factor in explaining why Primary Health Care medicines do not always reach the beneficiaries. This means that decentralization of the monitoring function has not completely solved the challenge of providing quality services to the local community.

Findings by Smoke (2015) pointed that decentralization of the monitoring function to the local people can offer considerable advantages like greater efficiency in organization as well as effectiveness in apportioning funds, deeper inhabitant contribution, as well as improved responsibility systems, although there exists inadequate practical proof of optimistic consequences.

#### **4.7 Summary**

The chapter contained the presentation and analysis of the study findings and it was structured along three specific study objectives; to establish the civil servants’ perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties;

to establish civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties; and to establish civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized monitoring on public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties. The study observed that the perceptions on the relationship between decentralized planning, implementation and monitoring were slightly positive among the civil servants though many indicated that after its rollout, it is over 22 years and a lot should have been achieved by now, though the impact is visible. Challenges such as high levels of corruption, lack of political will, inadequate resources among others were reported by majority of respondents as causes of unsatisfactory service delivery level in all the Sub Counties visited by the researcher. In all, the sub counties in Jinja have done a tremendous job with service delivery following the roll out of decentralization despite the bottlenecks that the sub counties face.

# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This study investigated the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties. The previous chapter was concerned with analyzing, presenting and interpreting data got from respondents in Jinja district local Government Sub counties. This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations according to the specific objectives of the study.

### **5.2 Summary of the findings**

The study investigated the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties. This study was guided by the following specific objectives; to establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties; establish civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties; and to establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized monitoring on public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties.

### **5.2.1 Civil servants' perception on decentralized planning and public service delivery**

The study findings revealed that there was an overwhelming consensus among the participants that joint problem identification with the involvement of the locals helped to improve service delivery. The general perception indicated that service delivery has been positively impacted upon in the sub counties in terms of quality of services, customer satisfaction and timeliness of services in Jinja District. Decentralization of resource mobilization as a form of decentralized planning has had a positive impact in terms of easing the works such as road repairs, garbage collection, and provision of clean water, rural electrification programmes and community health care in the local governments mainly due to the local revenues. Several participants believed that their participation in identification of problems affecting their areas had helped to deliver quality services because they believed that resources would no longer be wasted in areas that could not benefit the local communities optimally. As per the data provided by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, education in Jinja district showed great improvement.

About 8,164 which is 6.2% of the children aged between 6-15 years were not attending primary school, with males constituting at 6.4% the number being 4,156 and females 6.0%, the number being 4,008 in relation to the 81,582 children currently enjoying Universal Primary Education which is currently run in a decentralized manner.

### **5.2.2 Civil servants' perception on decentralized implementation and public service delivery**

The study findings revealed that there is shortage of room for

implementation by local government officials which is likely to affect service delivery negatively. Participants held the perception that decentralized implementation helped to reduce on the cases of mismanagement of resources. Many respondents had the perception that putting more emphasis on implementation with full participation of community member has led to improved service delivery in terms of timely delivery, improved customer care, reduced complaints and so many other achievements. The general perception was that the decentralization of implementation to the local governments has to a great extent improved the level of service delivery however there are still a number of challenges that need to be streamlined to enable the decentralization framework function very well and this rotates around provision of sufficient resources ranging from human, financial, infrastructural and so much more. The data provided by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics indicated that the number of households that had access to community services like a primary school within a radius of 5km had increased to from 1,809 which was only about 1.7% of the population in 2014 to 4,435 indicating that decentralization implementation had had a positive impact in improving service delivery in the sub counties.

### **5.2.3 Civil servants' perception on decentralized monitoring on public service delivery**

The study findings revealed that in some lower local governments, community members' participation in monitoring was being choked which results into poor service delivery. There was a perception that the higher local government have the upper hand at district level in the current decentralized system, less for the local communities thereby creating less ownership of the system by the local community which has negatively

impacted on quality of services for instance in health and education in Jinja especially in the rural areas. Participants held the perception that weak inspection or monitoring was a top factor in explaining why public services do not always reach the beneficiaries citing mostly medicines that do not reach the health centers, meaning that decentralization of the monitoring arm has not completely solved the challenge of quality services provision.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

The following conclusions were drawn from the study findings; they were presented according to the study objectives;

#### **5.3.1 Civil servants' perception on decentralized planning and public service delivery**

Basing on the study findings, it can be concluded that the more effective involvement of local community members in problem identification, the more empowered the community members are in discussing customer needs and hence the better the lower local governments are placed as far as service delivery is concerned in Jinja district local government.

#### **5.3.2 Civil servants' perception on decentralized implementation and public service delivery**

Basing on the study findings, it is concluded that there was limited tendency for strategic implementation and often inadequate coordination of actors; even instances that seem more strategic may be partly a by-product of other forces and/or are relatively superficial. In Jinja district, technical and governance capacity were generally weak, so the lack of an implementation strategy tied to developing capacity (aside from limited use of compliance/performance based capital grants) led to weak outcomes

and created space for those who wished to selfishly gain through corruption.

### **5.3.3 Civil servants' perception on decentralized monitoring and public service delivery**

Basing on the study findings, it is concluded that weak inspection or monitoring was a top factor in explaining service deliverables such as medicines not always reaching the beneficiaries meaning that decentralization has not completely solved the challenge of providing services to the local community.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

As a result of these study findings, the investigator put forward the following recommendations;

The study recommends the professionalization of the function of local councils to improve the impact of their work, supervision of implementation of council decisions, and better participation of citizens in decision making and monitoring activities of the local governments. The increase in the number of household that could access a health facility with a distance of 5km stands at 3,541 as per the last statistics provided by Jinja district local government. The house holds that could access the nearest public health facility stood at 7,375 a clear indication that decentralization has had a positive contribution in public service delivery regardless of the impasses along its exodus.

As noted by the researcher, the long arm of the central government is far too reaching into the activities of the local governments and the impact can be felt in the activities of the sub counties. The central government should

be willing to devolve more powers to the local governments without unnecessary influence to give room to the local governments to freely decide on programmes that benefit their localities.

The issue of delayed and inadequate funding from government has been a major constraint that 80% of the respondents cited. Having been given the powers, it highly recommended that the local governments stretch their vision towards mobilizing their own funds from donors and locally to finance their programmes.

The study recommends establishing a community assembly to increase citizen participation in decision making, especially in allocating public funds. Community representatives should join council members in making decisions on important issues and should have the right to vote.

The study recommends that local governments should employ young people which a mindset that has been changed towards serving the community in local government agencies to increase efficiency, access, and openness to combat the challenge of corruption.

The study recommends ensuring ongoing funding for the work of community councils as a way to improve performance. Increase citizen information. The researcher feels that the timely and systematic distribution of working materials of the local leaders to all those who attend council sessions would enable better citizen participation and increase their knowledge about the work of the local governments.

## **5.5 Areas for further research**

This study has focused on the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local



Government Sub counties. Future research should focus on the following areas; investigating the other factors that affect service delivery in local governments in Uganda.

### **5.6 Limitations of the study**

The sample for the present study comprised of 24 local government staff members from Jinja district local Government Sub counties. This sample is only a very small proportion of the entire number of local governments in the country. Therefore, research studies with much larger sample size would be required to ensure appropriate generalization of the findings of the study.

The present study has relied solely on qualitative methodology of data and is therefore restrictive. Therefore, more of quantitative methodology of data collection should be undertaken in future to provide wider perspective to the present study. For instance, the research design can employ correlational study methodology or analysis to provide a holistic picture to the given subject.

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## **APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE**

1. How would you rate the level of public service delivery in Jinja District Local government? Explain briefly
2. How would do you comment about the level of accessibility to public services in this area? Please explain
3. How would do you comment about the timeliness of public services in this area? Please explain
4. How would do you comment about the quality of public services in this area? Please explain
5. How would do you comment about the level of sustainability of public services in this area? Please explain
6. Has decentralization of programmes and project planning to your district government in any way influenced public service delivery in this area? If yes please elaborate
7. Has decentralization of implementation of government programmes and projects to your district government in any way influenced public service delivery in this area? If yes please elaborate
8. Has decentralization of monitoring of government programmes and projects to your district government in any way influenced public service delivery in this area? If yes please elaborate
9. Are there any other elements of decentralization that you think have influenced public service delivery in this area? If yes, which ones?

# 추상

## 지방분권과 공공서비스제공 관계에 대한 진자 지역 지방자치단체 공무원의 인식 조사

**Obel Thomas**

서울대학교 행정대학원

글로벌행정전공

본 연구는 우간다의 진자 지역 지방자치단체 공무원의 지방분권과 공공서비스 제공의 관계에 대한 인식을 분석한 연구이며, 지방분권 기획, 집행 및 감사 등의 서비스 제공에 대한 정부와 그 개발협력 기관의 개입에도 불구하고, 서비스 제공은 여전히 품질, 접근성 및 적시성 측면에서 여전히 미흡하다는 것에 의문을 두고있다. 따라서, 본 연구를 통해 진자 지방자치단체 공무원의 지방분권적 감시와 공공서비스 제공에 대한 인식을 확립하고자 한다. 본 연구를 위해 질적 및 탐험적 사례 연구 설계에 따라, 25명의 응답자로부터 정성적 데이터를 수집하였고 인터뷰를 진행했으며, 해당 데이터를 종합, 분석 및 검토하여 시사점을 도출했다. 연구 결과, 지역주민을 포함한 공동 문제 식별 참여자들간의 압도적인 공감대가 서비스 제공 개선에 큰 도움이 되었다; 분권화된 집행으로 자원 부실 관리가 감소한 반면 일부 기초지방자치단체, 지역사회 구성원들의 감시 참여는

오래 전에 중단되거나 관리가 부실하여 서비스 제공의 질이 감소하였다. 결과적으로, 지역사회 구성원들의 문제 식별 참여가 효율적일수록, 그리고 지역사회 구성원들의 권한이 클수록 기초지방자치단체의 서비스제공 품질이 높은 것으로 나타났다; 전략적 집행과 부적절한 참여자간 협력은 제한적인 경향을 나타냈다; 부실한 점검이 서비스 제공 품질에 대하여 가장 많은 부분을 설명하는 요인으로써, 약품이 수혜자에게 전달되지 않는 사례 등은 분권화가 불충분한 감시 기능을 해결하지 못함을 보여준다.

주제어: 지방분권화, 지방분권 기획, 지방분권 집행, 지방분권 감시 & 공공서비스 제공

학번: 2018-22469

# **Civil Servants' Perceptions on the Relationship between Decentralization and Public Service Delivery in Jinja District Local Government Sub Counties**

**Academic Advisor Kim, Soon Eun**

**Submitting a Master's thesis of Public Administration**

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Seoul National University  
Global Public Administration Major**

**Obel Thomas**

**Confirming the master's thesis written by  
Obel Thomas**

**June 2020**

**Chair**

**Ko, Kilkon**



**Vice Chair**

**Jörg Michael Dostal**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Dostal", written over the official seal of the Vice Chair.

**Examiner**

**Kim, Sooneun**



**Master's Thesis of Public Administration**

**Civil Servants' Perceptions on the Relationship  
between Decentralization and Public Service  
Delivery in Jinja District Local Government  
Sub Counties**

**지방분권과 공공서비스제공 관계에 대한  
진자 지역 지방자치단체 공무원의 인식 조사**

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Seoul National University  
Global Public Administration Major**

**Obel Thomas**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this piece of work to my parents Mr. Orech Francis and Mrs Orech Santa, my Sisters Josephine and Jackie and to my dear wife Mrs. Nyamwenge Prisca.



**ABSTRACT**

**Civil Servants' Perceptions on the  
Relationship between  
Decentralization and Public Service  
Delivery in Jinja District Local  
Government Sub Counties**

**Thomas Obel**  
**Global Public Administration Major**  
**The Graduate School of Public Administration**  
**Seoul National University**

The researcher investigated the Civil servants' perception on the relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties, Uganda. The rationale of the study was that despite several interventions by the government and its development partners to improve service delivery inform of institution of decentralization of planning, implementation and monitoring to the local governments, service delivery still remained poor in terms of increased quality, access and timeliness among others. Therefore the study particularly sought to establish the civil servants' perception on decentralized planning; decentralized implementation; decentralized monitoring and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties. Following a largely qualitative as well as exploratory and case study design, the researcher collected qualitative data from a sample

of 25 respondents. The researcher used interviews as a guide for data collection. Data was synthesized, analyzed and reviewed to obtain insights and study conclusive information. The researcher found that an overwhelming consensus among the participants that joint problem identification with the involvement of the locals helped to improve service delivery; decentralized implementation helped reduce on the cases of mismanagement of resources; and some lower local governments, community members' participation in monitoring had been long dropped or poorly managed which results into poor service delivery. It concluded that the more effective involvement of local community members in problem identification, the more empowered the community members are in discussing customer needs and hence the better the lower local governments are placed as far as service delivery is concerned; there was limited tendency for strategic implementation and often inadequate coordination of actors; and weak inspection was a top factor in explaining service deliverables such as medicines not always reaching the beneficiaries meaning that decentralization has not completely solved the challenge of inadequate monitoring of services.

**Keywords:** Decentralization, Decentralized Planning, Decentralized Implementation Decentralized Monitoring & Public Service Delivery.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	i
DEDICATION .....	ii
ABSTRACT .....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	v
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES .....	viii
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Background to the Study .....	1
1.3 Problem Statement .....	10
1.4 General Objective .....	11
1.5 Specific Objective .....	12
1.6 Research Questions .....	12
1.7 Conceptual Framework .....	12
1.9 Scope of the Study .....	14
1.10 Significance of the Study .....	15
1.11 Justification of the Study .....	16
1.12 Operational Definitions .....	16
CHAPTER TWO .....	18
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	18
2.1 Introduction .....	18
2.2 Theoretical Review .....	18
2.3 Local Government Structure and Service delivery in Uganda .....	21
2.4 Decentralization Framework in Jinja District .....	23
2.5 Theoretical findings on the relationship between Decentralization and Public service delivery .....	25
2.5.1 Decentralized planning and public service delivery .....	25
2.5.2 Decentralized implementation and public service delivery .....	28
2.5.3 Decentralized monitoring and public service delivery .....	29
2.6 Summary of Literature Review .....	30

CHAPTER THREE.....	32
METHODOLOGY .....	32
3.1 Introduction .....	32
3.2. Research design .....	32
3.3 Study population.....	32
3.4. Determination of the Sample size.....	33
3.5 Sampling techniques and procedures.....	33
3.6. Data collection methods.....	34
3.7 Data collection instruments.....	35
3.8 Data quality control .....	35
3.8.1 Validity.....	35
3.8.2 Transferability.....	36
3.9 Data Analysis .....	36
3.10 Ethical considerations .....	37
CHAPTER FOUR.....	38
PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	38
4.1 Introduction .....	38
4.2 Response Rate .....	39
4.3 Service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties ..	39
4.4 Civil servants’ perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties .....	45
4.4.1 Problem Identification.....	45
4.4.2 Project Formulation.....	49
4.4.3 Resource Mobilization .....	52
4.5 Civil servants’ perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties.....	56
4.5.1 Implementation Approach and Service Delivery .....	57
4.5.2 Implementation Structures and Service Delivery .....	60
4.5.3 Decision Making Structures and Service Delivery .....	63

4.6 Civil servants' perception on decentralized monitoring and public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties .....	64
4.6.1 Data Management and Service Delivery .....	64
4.6.2 Accountability and Service Delivery .....	67
4.6.3 Transparency and service delivery .....	69
4.7 Summary .....	70
CHAPTER FIVE.....	72
SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	72
5.1 Introduction .....	72
5.2 Summary of the findings .....	72
5.2.1 Civil servants' perception on decentralized planning and public service delivery.....	73
5.2.2 Civil servants' perception on decentralized implementation and public service delivery .....	73
5.2.3 Civil servants' perception on decentralized monitoring on public service delivery.....	74
5.3 Conclusions .....	75
5.3.1 Civil servants' perception on decentralized planning and public service delivery.....	75
5.3.2 Civil servants' perception on decentralized implementation and public service delivery .....	75
5.3.3 Civil servants' perception on decentralized monitoring and public service delivery .....	76
5.4 Recommendations.....	76
5.5 Areas for further research.....	77
5.6 Limitations of the study .....	78
REFERENCES.....	79
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE .....	87
추상 .....	88

## **LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES**

Table 3.1: Showing Sampling Techniques and Sample Representations of the Study.....	33
Figure 1.1 : Conceptual Framework	13
Figure 2.2: Theoretical Framework.....	20

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Decentralization for long has been viewed to be a key strategy instrument for aiding to increase service delivery as well as the solving the needs of the locals in low developed states (Green, 2015, p.1). Other practical evidence proposes that decentralization permits local governments to answer well to local's desires than the central governments (Green, 2015, p.1). Article 176 (2) (b) of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (as altered) states that, "decentralization is a standard relating to every level of local government and, to be specific, from advanced to inferior local government divisions to certify public's involvement along with self-governing regulation in coming up with a decision." The research evaluated Civil Servants' perceptions on the relationship of decentralization and public service provision at local governments in Uganda with specific focus on Jinja district local government sub counties. Decentralization with the dimensions of decentralized planning; decentralized implementation and decentralized monitoring were the independent variable while Public service delivery with the indicators of accessibility, timeliness, quality and sustainability as the dependent variable. The chapter contains the background of the study, statement of the problem, conceptual framework, and scope of the study, significance and justification of the study concluded by working definitions.

### **1.2 Background to the Study**

Under colonial rule most of Uganda was governed by a system of British district commissioners. Under these commissioners chiefs held powers

over taxes, courts, local councils and general law and order. In the eastern and northern parts of Uganda which had no tradition of kingdoms or hierarchical leadership, the imposition of chiefs was alien and, while ruling under "customary" law, chiefs in such areas were actually closer to modern civil servants than traditional pre-colonial rulers.

The situation of administration was remarkably different in the five kingdoms of Ankole, Buganda, Busoga, Bunyoro and Toro in the southern and western part of the country, which had a long pre-colonial history of political hierarchy, in some cases dating back centuries (MOLG, 2012). Here the British instituted a system of indirect rule whereby local governments retained some similarities with the pre-colonial era, in particular in Buganda, the largest and most powerful of the kingdoms. In part, due to greater local legitimacy, the Buganda kingdom clashed with the central government in the 1950s over its degree of political independence and eventually requested to be granted a federal status in the country's future constitution. Concerns about a future civil war led the British Commissioner in charge of designing the post-colonial government to recommend a federal status for Buganda but only recommend a semi-federal status for the other kingdoms and a unitary system for the rest of the country because they were not as rich or large as Buganda, thereby creating a highly unequal system of local governance upon independence in 1962 (Ssalongo, 2011).

This arrangement continued for only four years after independence, in large part because the Buganda kingdom continued to clash with Milton Obote's national government in Kampala over its degree of political freedom. This time, however, the central government decided to send in troops rather than accede to the kingdom's demands, thereby leading to



exile of the king of Buganda and the dissolution of all kingdoms as local government entities (Green, 2015). The twenty years between the exile of King Muteesa in 1966 and the beginning of current President Yoweri Museveni's rule in 1986 were ones of autocratic and illegitimate local government due to the undemocratic and highly centralized nature of the national government. The 1967 Constitution not only completely dissolved all kingdoms' federal status but also took power away from the district assemblies and split the country into eighteen equal districts. The constitution also abolished all district land boards, placing their power in the Uganda Land Commission (Sathyamurthy 1986, pp. 440-441). Indeed, as Sathyamurthy (1986, p. 445) notes, "from the beginning, Obote regarded strong local governments... as obstacles in the way of forging a united Uganda according to his radical political philosophy."

The National Resistance Movement (NRM) came to power in 1986 and this was the peak of World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programs alongside its New Public Management reforms. Like in many of the African and Asian countries that had obtained political independence a few decades ago, the NRM immediately embarked on a decentralization path, starting with the election of Resistance Councils (RCs). Lubanga (1996: p.50) contends that, apart from serving as a political method of empowerment, decentralization was regarded as a policy aimed at improving local democracy, accountability, efficiency intra and inter-district equality, effectiveness and sustainability. Accordingly, the 1995 Constitution of Uganda and subsequently the 1997 Local Governments Act, gave impetus and legal backing for Decentralized Local Governance in Uganda. Article 176 (1) stipulates that: "The system of local government in Uganda shall be based on the district as a unit under which there shall

be such lower local governments and administrative units as parliament may by law provide”. Similarly Article 176 (2) b, specifies that “decentralization shall be the principle applying to all local government and in particular, from higher to lower local government units to ensure people’s participation and democratic control in decision making” (Uganda, 1995:117).

Decentralization in Uganda started way back with the signing of the African Native Authority Ordinance of 1919 when chiefs who were selected at village, sub-county then national levels came to an agreement (Titeca and Kristof, 2005). Decentralization in Uganda, was not a local political initiative, like the rest of the world, Uganda’s decentralization visibly came at a time when World Bank through Structural Adjustment programs embarked on Decentralization Policy in Africa, Asia and other parts of the world, with political and fiscal devolution (Martinez-Vazquez & Vaillacourt, 2011:1).

As a recipe on the New Public Management reforms menu, decentralization became a key concept to be adopted and followed in the developed and developing countries.

Mugabi (2004) noted that the constitution of Uganda at independence in 1962 introduced a decentralized policy management system as a hybrid of federalism, semi-federalism and unitary systems that gave federal eminence to kingdoms of Buganda, Ankole, Bunyoro, Toro, Busoga and also enabled Councils to be set up in districts of Acholi, Bugisu, Bukedi, Karamoja, Kigezi, Lango, Madi, Sebei, Teso as well as West Nile. In 1986, the importance of decentralization policy management was overemphasized and this led to the formation of resistance councils that

are known today as the Local Council (LCs) that provide platforms on which local leadership interact with local persons at different managerial stages (Mugabi, 2004).

Similar to the entire world, Uganda's regionalization emerged in a period when World Bank via Structural Adjustment programs adopted Decentralization Strategy in Africa, Asia along with other parts of the world, using political as well as economic decentralisation (Martinez-Vazquez and Vaillacourt, 2011). Uganda established decentralization via the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (as revised) supported later by the 1997 Local Government Act. Devolution was anticipated to increase the public's right of their involvement in the deciding procedures, so as to: weigh the service provision matters in regions of health, teaching, water as well as hygiene and others; help in growth of inhabitant's abilities; improve public's receptiveness, openness with immediate answerability in better public service provision (Kulumba, 2013).

Decentralization began in 1993 and culminated in the devolution of power to local authorities, subsequently accompanied by significant financial resources (Bukenya and Golooba-Mutebi, 2019). It was at a time when the orthodoxy of the Washington Consensus emphasized the importance of liberalizing developing countries' economies and democratizing their politics. Unlike governments that found donors reforms unpalatable and were therefore reluctant to implement, Uganda was different (Bukenya and Golooba-Mutebi, 2019). The NRM government had independently decided on the broad outlines of the reforms that it wanted to implement, entailing the reconfiguring of politics in general, and dispersing authority as well as responsibility from centers to local governments (Bukenya & Golooba-Mutebi, 2019).

Uganda started the decentralization procedure in 1997 after the establishment of Local Government Act, 1997. The basis was to upsurge allocative and fruitful effectiveness in service delivery (Nannyonjo & Okot, 2013). Devolution of service provision eases deciding as well as observing districts and low stages of local governments comprising of public contribution (Nannyonjo & Okot, 2013).

As a result, the District Local Governments (DLGs) were answerable for funds allotted plus observing the value of services delivered. It is believed that decentralized systems offer opportunities for increased beneficiaries' involvement in the direct decision making process in services prioritization, quality, cost and preferences. The rapid growth in the number of districts (from 34 in 1990 to 134 in 2019), many of which lack the human, financial and infrastructural capacity to operate effectively, is yet another case. One of its consequences is the emergence of weak, poorly led and poorly facilitated local governments whose capacity for delivering services to citizens is severely limited (Cammack et al., 2007 cited in Bukenya and Golooba-Mutebi, 2019). And the larger the number of districts, the further the capacity of the ministry to provide leadership and perform its supervisory functions is undermined (Golooba-Mutebi, 2012 cited in Bukenya and Golooba-Mutebi, 2019). This study assessed the perceptions of civil servants' on relationship between decentralization and service delivery in Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

Decentralization is a main plan for shifting duties from the state to local government stages of the state. It's an important alteration of the institutional framework in which political, social, plus monetary

judgments are arrived at. Rondinelli (1984) made different midst diverse kinds of devolution; de-concentration is the shifting from central organizations working in capital cities to field bodies of these institutions; delegation is the shifting of service duty from central state bodies to specified establishments with some amount of working independence (semi-independent establishments or else local government units of the state); decentralization refers to the shifting from central government to independent entities of subnational with company status (entities having a constitutional or statutory base of authority which is different from central state); also privatization is the shifting of charge for generating goods or services to private charitable establishments or private businesses.

Devolution is the transfer of administrative authority such as planning, decision making and the collection of public revenues from the central government to provincial institutions, local governments, or federal units (Wagana, 2017). Lwanga (2016) noted that decentralization is broadly defined as ‘the transfer of public authority, resources, and personnel from the national level to sub-national jurisdictions’ and is normally viewed as falling into the political, administrative and fiscal spheres.

Devolution refers to shifting of managerial as well as political controls from the state to lower levels providing them with authority to decide (Wagana, 2017). Economic Devolution is a group of rules intended to upsurge incomes or monetary independence of local governments (Wagana, 2017).

Sub-national government is officially comprised of a district, municipal or city council, then local council committees (Lwanga, 2016). Local government is a product of devolution as a dimension of Decentralization

(Robson, 1937). Sub-national government is the portion of the entire state of the state or nation that is managed by specialists' answerable to the government powers, however appointed self-sufficiently from regulation by the government powers, by competent individuals occupier, or being with goods in some areas, which areas have been created by societies with shared intentions as well as shared past (Gomme, 1987). Meyer (1978) describes subnational governments to be locally elected serving elements in the similar elected method of the nation, that are lesser associates of the regime entrusted with set, measured, state authority with bases of revenue to offer definite native services also to grow, regulate as well as control the topographical, social then economic setting of distinct native part.

A public service is an item supplied or action which is taken that satisfies the desires of a big part of consumers. An operational public service is founded on action by the giver to comprehend desires of the consumers by giving data; goods as well as guidance that are custom-made to the definite desires of consumers (Uganda, 2015). Local service provision is the link amid strategy creators, goods suppliers, also customers of the goods, in addition includes services as well as their backup mechanisms (Uganda, 2015). Service provision is a system utilized by an institution to satisfy the desires and ambitions of the persons it is destined to help (Uganda, 2015). Local service provision is the delivery of social services, like drinkable water, decent roads, medical supply as well as energy, envisioned to improve people's distress by postponement and or improving the lifespan of the inhabitants (Wagana, 2017). The research will clearly present the perception of civil servants' on the relationship of decentralization on public service provision in Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

In Uganda the Decentralization strategy is directed by the Constitution, the Subnational Government Act (cap 243), Decentralization Policy Strategic Framework (DPSF), Fiscal Decentralization Strategy (FDS), Local Government Sector Strategic Plan (LGSSP), Public Sector Management Strategic Investment Plan (PSM-SIP) in addition to the National Development Plan (NDP). PSM-SIP summarizes planned organization as well as allocating funds in main planned parts of the state. The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) follows up the divisions. Planned state parts under PSM-SIP comprise of: Ministry of Local Government, subnational state Associations, subnational state Finance Commission, Ministry of Public Service, Public Service Commission, as well as the Kampala Capital City Authority (Uganda, 2013).

Service provision ethics were advanced in favor of the order of the Ministry of Local Government. The Ministry establishes subdivision strategies, organizes, observes, directs, oversees, guides then backs local governments in execution of devolution services (Uganda, 2015).

In the decentralization framework, the district, that is the main unit of subnational state, is accountable for main roles as well as services formerly done via the state. Subnational state are accountable for state services that contain primary health care, primary teaching, feeder road workings, water then hygiene as well as farming while the line offices offer the strategy guidance in a manner these decentralized services are executed (Tamale & Kitamirike, 2015). The district professional sections that in reality regulate the cost are the public service provision bodies of the subnational state. They are under the control of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) whose monetary answerability tasks mainly are with the state departments which regulate the provisional gifts (Tamale & Kitamirike, 2015).

The greatest regularly-cited challenge is the absence of capability at local stages of the state to practice accountability of public services. In Uganda, the lower levels of state do not have the capability to control state funds as well as uphold good bookkeeping processes. Other challenges comprise of few workers, income deficits, wastage as well as dishonesty, low fund allocation, compounded by inadequate local income collection (Green, 2015). For instance, medical service provision of current and past districts funding hasn't been amplified. Bird (2014) argues that a significant number of local governments do not have the administrative, managerial, monetary as well as official ability to satisfy the increasing desires of native citizens. Consequently, the local governments cannot satisfy their mandatory working ethics therefore affecting badly on service provision. As Onyach (2012), has shown, provincial governments of Uganda remain functioning at negligible staffing levels; some instances as low as 10% (Medical strike 2017) of the approved establishment. There is an immense unmet need for the more effective delivery of social services across Uganda, with vast segments of the population lacking adequate health and education services and basic infrastructure for clean water and sanitation (World Bank, 2013; Fiala & Premand, 2018). As asked by Lwanga (2016) "Is it an indication of failure of decentralization?" This study therefore presents the perception of civil servants' on relationship between decentralization and service delivery in Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Jinja District was one of the initial 27 districts decentralized in 1993/94 because of the establishment of the local governments (Resistance Councils) Decree, 1993, with the intention of improving service provision.



But, whereas the over-all aims of decentralization were to answer to native desires, the subsequent amount, value, production timing, availability and user's contentment of the services haven't met the native expectation. Current information indicates no development of social services or value for life for native societies (Ssonko, 2013). In reality, several pointers have either stayed similar or deteriorated. For instance, the big part of Uganda's populace still survives underneath the poverty line, with 25% surviving in total poverty (UBOS, 2017). Only three out of ten (27.4%) agricultural households in the district are employing modern agricultural practices; Nearly seven in ten households do not receive their full drug prescription when they visit a government hospital for medical treatment; access to piped water remains out of reach for the majority of households (Fiala & Premand, 2018). Despite these challenges to decentralized service delivery, there has been no rigorous empirical analysis and documentation of decentralization under the dimensions of planning, implementation, monitoring and their relationship with service provision in Uganda. This study aimed to fill this gap by investigating the perception of civil servants' on the relationship of decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

#### **1.4 General Objective**

This research investigated the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties in Uganda.

### **1.5 Specific Objective**

- i. To establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties.
- ii. To establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties.
- iii. To establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized monitoring on public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties.

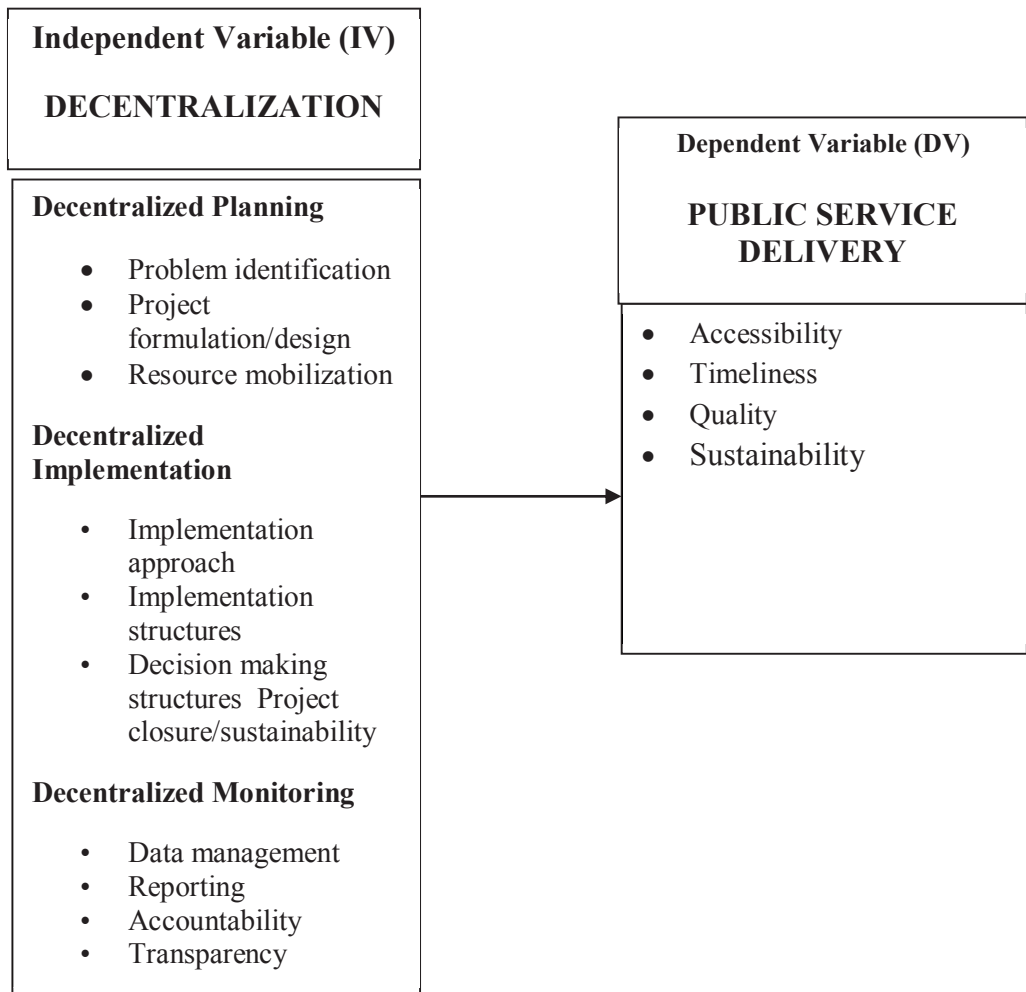
### **1.6 Research Questions**

- i. What is the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District Local government?
- ii. What is the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District Local government?
- iii. What is the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized monitoring and public service delivery in Jinja District Local government?

### **1.7 Conceptual Framework**

This study established the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties. The study's conceptual framework focused on the model shown in the Figure 1.1 below.

**Figure 1.1 : Conceptual Framework**



**Source:** *Adapted from Ssonko (2013) and modified by the researcher*

**Figure 1.1: showing the relationship between decentralization and public service delivery**

Figure 1.1 shows the relationships between decentralization and public service delivery where by perceived decentralization is in the dimensions of decentralized planning, decentralized implementation and decentralized monitoring is the independent variable while Public service delivery with

the indicators of accessibility, timeliness, quality and sustainability is the dependent variable. The conceptual framework shows that decentralization would work to contribute to Public service delivery positively or negatively.

## **1.9 Scope of the Study**

### **Geographical Scope**

The research was carried out at Sub County levels in Jinja District Local Government situated Eastern Uganda and in Busoga Region. The Jinja District Local Government was considered because Jinja District was one of the initial 27 districts decentralized in 1993/94 arising from the establishment of the subnational Governments (Resistance Councils) Decree, 1993, with the aim of better service delivery. However the study was specifically conducted in Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo sub counties because these have the highest population in the District.

### **Content Scope**

The study investigated the civil servants' perception on decentralization with the dimensions of decentralized planning; decentralized implementation and decentralized monitoring were the independent variable; decentralized planning were limited to Problem identification, project formulation/design and resource mobilization; decentralized implementation were limited to implementation approach, implementation structures and decision making structures Project closure/sustainability; decentralized monitoring were limited to data management, reporting, accountability and transparency as indicators. Public service delivery with the indicators of accessibility, timeliness, quality and sustainability were the dependent variable.

## **Time Scope**

This study collected data covering the period of 5 (five) years 2014 to 2019. The period of time period was preferred as it was within the same time period that sustainable development goals (SDGs) were set by the United Nations as a guide for development (Fiala & Premand, 2018).

### **1.10 Significance of the Study**

The research will be beneficial in a number of ways;-

The Ministry of Local Government shall be enlightened through the findings in this research about the areas in which they need to improve with regards to decentralized planning; decentralized implementation; decentralized monitoring and public service delivery alongside other public organizations such as the National Planning Authority can also apply the findings of this study to improve on service delivery.

The study findings shall be important to the many different Local Governments in Uganda through capacitating them to establish the relationship, which exists between decentralization and public service delivery and its effect on national development from the grass roots.

The findings will also be useful to policy makers like the Cabinet, Parliament of Uganda and the Ministry of Local Government who may use the findings to come up with policy reforms on decentralization and public service delivery.

Most importantly, the study findings shall be the basis for future academic research or knowledge which may require additional investigation on decentralization and public service delivery.

### **1.11 Justification of the Study**

Literature suggests that decentralization has not been an easy route to effective service delivery, as it involves complex processes that influence quality and coverage of services (Okwaroh, 2018). For example, there are occasions when roll-outs of decentralization programmes have faced rejection or resistance by sectorial/line ministries of national/central governments (Okwaroh, 2018). Despite these challenges to decentralized service delivery, there has been no rigorous empirical analysis and documentation of decentralization under the dimensions of planning, implementation, monitoring and their relationship with service delivery in Uganda. This study aims to cover this space in the works by investigating civil servants' perception on the relationship between decentralization and public service delivery with a bias to Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

### **1.12 Operational Definitions**

**Decentralization:** was used to refer to transferring responsibility for planning, implementation and monitoring of government programmes and projects from the central government to the local government levels.

**Decentralized planning:** was utilized to denote to the devolution of deciding and drafting of plans to local government from the central government.

**Decentralized implementation:** was used to refer to devolution of the translation of plans into practice and involves accomplishing and completing a plan to the local government.

**Decentralized monitoring:** was used to refer to devolution of provision of periodic information for tracking progress of implementation of programmes and projects according to previously approved plans, work schedules and targeted output to the local government.

**Public service delivery:** was used to refer to the delivery of communal services, like safe water provision, decent infrastructures, medical provision, good education as well as power to the local population by local governments.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The chapter presents a review of current literature as written down in journals, schoolbooks, magazines, newspaper articles in addition to the internet, linked to decentralization and public service delivery. The chapter is structured under the headings of; Introduction, theoretical review, review of associated literature as well as summary of literature review, highlighting gaps that were established.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Review**

The research was directed by the Public choice concept (Buchanan, 1985). Public choice theory deals with the problem of "public goods." Goods which a producer cannot "ration" or "market" and are therefore freely available to all consumers if provided to any, are considered to be "public goods." Public choice theory helps to explain why infrastructure (roads, bridges, safe water supplies, market facilities, schools, hospitals) is necessary for rural development. Public choice theory is useful in understanding the slow pace of rural development in the Third World. A simple "de-concentration" or "delegation" of functions to subordinate levels of a bureaucracy is unlikely to have these results (Wunsch, 1984). Public-Choice concept is based on the proposal that people's tastes for native public goods differ from area to area, since preferences as well as readiness to buy vary for topographical, ethnic and past motives (also that tastes in every area are rationally identical).

Specifically, semi-autonomous, sub-national political communities when dealing with practical areas appropriate public goods according to their



geographic and technical scales. They can help make rules and operating realities by providing structures of incentives and opportunities which reward local leadership for defining and integrating community needs, building coalitions around them; and which provide local leaders who will persuade individuals when information is incomplete that the risks and benefits of supporting a "public good" either by contribution or restraint are favorable to their interests.

They help make rules effective by allowing local conditions to guide, modify and undergird rules and programs which will provide and/or protect "public goods; help communities expand their rule making potential by providing experiences and incentives through which social learning can occur, which can be the basis for more enlightened, long-term, and community-oriented calculations of self-interest and rational behavior, and can define new areas where "public goods" might be provided (Brennan, Kliemt and Tollison, 2002).

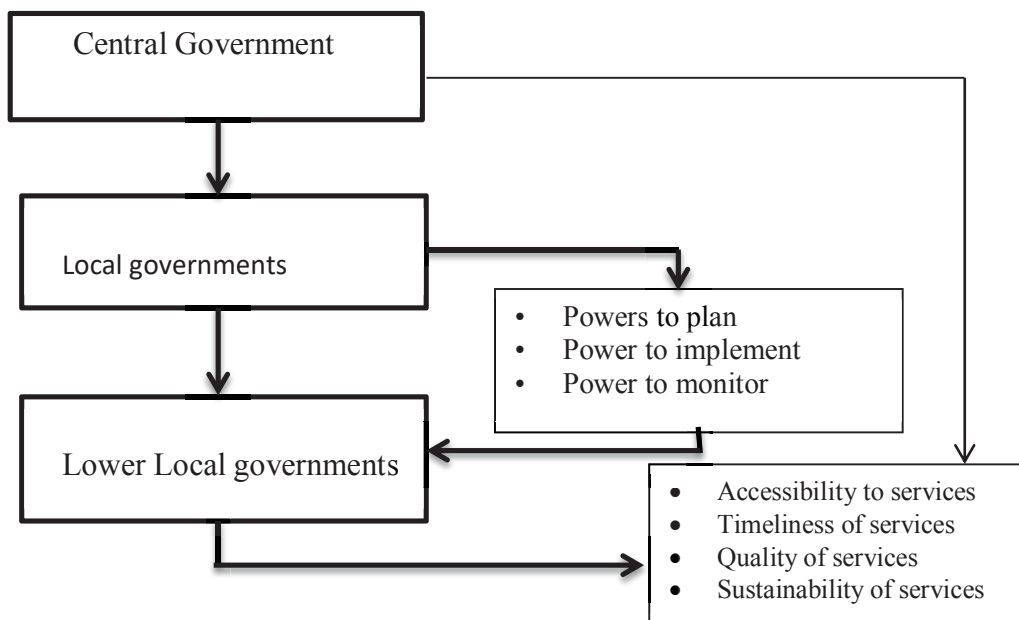
The Public choice theory that centralized delivery of natives public services, (if it inclines to be similar throughout the nation), is expected to satisfy no one. It consequently is said, that governments must simply give the goods which agree with native desires (Wunsch, 1984). It is claimed that decentralization decreased the item price of offering local goods as well as services. That it inclines to lessen item prices, via humbler provision processes as well as adding on present native funds, information, equipment as well as official abilities (Brennan, Kliemt and Tollison, 2002). Thus, from a 'public-choice' view, decentralization is a state where state services as well as goods are delivered via the exposed tastes of persons by market systems. So, the Public choice theory (Buchanan, 1985) will be utilized in investigating civil servants' perception on the

relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district Local Government sub counties in Uganda.

Decentralization of the authority over administering redistribution programs to local communities has recently become widespread in the developing world. These initiatives have transferred responsibility of procurement, selection of local projects, and identification of beneficiaries from central ministries to local governments or community representatives.

The presumed argument in favor of decentralizing delivery systems is that local governments will be subject to electoral pressures from local citizens, who are able to monitor delivery better than a distant central authority.

**Figure 2.2: Theoretical Framework**



**Source:** Adapted from Ssonko (2013); Wagana, Iravo, & Nzulwa (2015, p. 464) and modified by the researcher

The decentralization mechanism facilitates good governance. As a result, local governments and lower local governments are empowered to plan projects and activities; to implement; and to monitor projects and activities. There is a need for a decentralization system for productive efficiency at the local level. Subnational governments are closer to the people. Also, sub-national governments can assist in improving the efficiency of central governments. Over the past three decades, the new trend in governance has been the use of decentralization mechanisms in the provision of public services for many developed and developing countries (Shah & Thompson, 2004, pp. 1-2). The government is based on three governance levels for the fulfillment of its functions; the Central government with the major resource base, the Local governments and the Lower Local governments that are closer to the people and can easily relate with them to identify their pressing needs. (Eigeman, 2007). Most developing countries have primarily decentralized the resources and responsibilities needed to provide local governments with health and education services (Khemani, 2004). However, the delivered services such as education, health care, infrastructure, social welfare, sanitation, environmental protection, and waste management happen through all these layers.

### **2.3 Local Government Structure and Service delivery in Uganda**

The local government system in Uganda is based on the district as a unit, under which there are lower local governments and administrative units (Uganda, 1995). There are three main types of local government and these are: first; the local governments in a district rural area are, the district council and the sub county councils; secondly the local governments in a city are the city council and the city division councils; and thirdly the local

governments in a municipality are the municipal council and the municipal division councils (Uganda, 1997).

The Municipal Council is an equivalent of a county. Other lower local governments are: sub county and municipal division council local governments. Below this level are the parishes and the wards in rural and urban local governments respectively.

In Uganda, like many other developing countries embarked on decentralization for a democratic, participatory, decentralized local government system that could sustain development and deliver services efficiently and effectively to the people (MOLG, 2012). Besides transfer of power from center to districts, political control at local level, enhancing local economic development and improving local capacity in management of resources, decentralization policy in Uganda envisioned improvement in accountability and responsibility at the local level (MOLG, 2012).

Scholars have argued that, once a country decentralizes; there would be: a) responsive, b) efficient, and c) accountable governance at the local level. Despite these claims, most decentralization efforts end up without increasing the powers of local authorities. (Agrawal & Ribot, 1999:473-474).

One crucial issue of decentralization is that there has not yet been much real improvements of service delivery. The ultimate objective of decentralization is to reduce the persistent poverty in Uganda by improving the essential public services like health, education, transport and environmental management. However, this intention has not been fully realized. Generally, service providers, either health workers or teachers, claim that decentralization has brought better control over their resources, and this is one important reason

why civil service staff are supportive of decentralization. Yet, on the other hand, service receivers do not express that the services have greatly improved in recent years.

In Uganda challenges are reported in the media of how service delivery in many parts of the country is in a poor state. For instance, Jinja Municipal Council failed to provide essential services such as garbage collection (New Vision 19<sup>th</sup> Jan 2016). Despite decentralization's promise for more accountable government, results have been mixed at best. The literature on decentralization contains many examples where decentralization has not led to greater accountability (Venugopal & Yilmaz, 2010:1). In Uganda, some districts are reported to be performing better than others. Bukedea and Adjumani districts were for instance reported to be the best performing districts; while others performed poorly (Monitor, June 27<sup>th</sup> 2019). The question that we need to ask here is, why do some local governments have better accountability performance than others? This is the gap this study intends to address given that all the local governments in Uganda receive conditional and unconditional grants. This study in its focus will also look into why certain local governments are more accountable than others despite enjoying the same legislative mandate.

## **2.4 Decentralization Framework in Jinja District**

Jinja district government now consists of a District Local Council (LC-V), headed by its directly-elected chairperson, as its legislature, and the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and her staff as its executive branch. There is also a Resident District Commissioner (RDC) appointed by the President to handle matters of national importance, such as security, and to monitor the implementation of government programmes and projects. Former

central government departments that operated on the district level are now integrated units headed by the LC-V and supervised by the CAO.

Decentralization Policy, in Jinja district local Government has got an elaborate institutional framework. These include the Council, the Standing Committees, the Technical Planning Committees and Statutory Bodies. The latter include the District Service Commission (DSC), the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) the District Land Board (DLB) and the District Contracts Committees Committee.

Some departments and functions at the Local Government levels remained ‘abandoned’ and dysfunctional. These include the Community Development Office and all its constituent arms, the District Commercial Office, Entomology, Cooperatives (in some sub counties) and the Internal Audit. Some of these offices carried the critical mandate and role in driving decentralization, yet their capacity and operation remains sub-optimal.

The Human resource function in Jinja District Local government is partly controlled by the Central Government. The central government sets staff ceilings in Local Governments and also controls the wage bill. The framework provides for elaborate participatory structures and modalities. Nonetheless, their application and functionality varies from locality to locality in the district.

Citizen participation in monitoring Jinja local government programmes is very limited due to lack of appropriate information and being encouraged to participate appropriately.

At the district level, the key budget players are the councilors under a political umbrella with the role of passing the final budget and a mandate to either accept or decline a budget for a specified program. As

decentralization offers councilors powers in decision making, some of them are less educated and have less concern about developmental projects, always with preferences for projects of their own interests especially from which they can take some money for their own benefit at the expense of the citizens.

## **2.5 Theoretical findings on the relationship between Decentralization and Public service delivery**

In the research the literature was reviewed on decentralized planning, implementation, monitoring and their impact on service delivery as presented below;

### **2.5.1 Decentralized planning and public service delivery**

Decentralization brings deciding nearer to persons to increase working and provision of services (Wagana, 2017). Klaver and Tibamwenda 2009, investigated the impact of working decentralization on provision of services on Districts in Uganda. This research used bivariate regression analysis and moderated multiple regressions to analyze the association between governance decentralization dimensions, e-government, and service delivery variables. The discoveries showed that working decentralization had an important impact on provision of services in the local government. Exactly, this research established that monetary devolution, political devolution, managerial devolution, locals' contribution as well as social answerability actions entirely had optimistic followed by important impact on provision of services. The current research differs significantly from the reviewed study in various conceptual areas for example the reviewed study suffers from conceptual gaps since it measured decentralization from the multiple dimensions of

financial , political, administrative decentralization rather than from (planning, implementation, monitoring) as this study did.

Akinboade et al. (2013) studied legal resident contribution in preparation and district service delivery disapprovals. This research realized provision of service was anchored on the levels of criticisms that the municipality always received from the locals who were regarded as opinion leaders in society as indicated by the number services that were immediately provided. It meant small portion of inhabitant contribution in service delivery in particular local governments. Anjum (2016) investigated the relationship between district's adoption of decentralization and the ability of the municipal governments to provide right to simple goods like water as well as hygiene to its inhabitants. This study found that while the administrative planning decentralization framework centered on the idea of service provision, decentralization pursued in Mbale has brought government closer to the people though it has also placed heavy burdens on municipal institutions to provide services that they are ill-equipped to shoulder. However, the studies (Akinboade et al., 2013; and Anjum, 2016) focused on good approachability then disregarded more measures of providing services namely timeliness, value then sustainability.

In Gulu district within Uganda, Komakech (2014) assessed participating costing or planning mechanism with its relationship on improved contentment stages with public services. This investigation resolved that the degree by which residents contribute to the procedure of state policies are expected to affect the predictable paybacks of the decentralization of public service delivery. This study is also limited to the northern Uganda context hence difficult to generalize the research findings in other regions of the Country due to diverse political and cultural environment.



Goncalves (2014) investigated if the usage of inhabitant participating costing of municipalities throughout 1990–2004 impacted the design of municipal expenses also had slight influence on standards of living. This research established that municipalities employing participating costing helped in apportioning of state expenses which carefully met general tastes. Additionally, they established that municipalities directed a greater portion of the costs to saving in hygiene as well as medical goods that was followed by a decrease in newborn death levels. The researchers resolved that a very direct communication amid service consumers as well as chosen representatives in costing strategy could impact the way local funds are consumed as well as living condition consequences. The reviewed study was also done in western Uganda and hence difficult to generalize to other settings like Jinja District in Eastern Uganda.

Edzii (2017) examined decentralized educational planning policy by exploring meanings of decentralization and decentralized educational planning, the legal framework and how it has been implemented in practice at district level from the perspectives of key stakeholders. The study found that stakeholders have diverse understandings about the meaning of decentralization, and decentralized educational planning. In broad, it was found that decentralization entails empowering the districts/locals to make choices and being accountable for decisions made.

The study also found that School Management Committee/Parent Teachers Association members participate in the decentralized educational planning procedure but that their level of involvement is very low (Edzii, 2017). The study also notes that there is poor capacity development for planners and other stakeholders in a system of decentralized education planning. The low level of public contribution in choice making to execute learning

growth could result into letdown in planning (Edzii, 2017). The reviewed study is different from the current study in that Edzii (2017) focused on decentralized educational planning and service delivery not decentralized planning in general as this study did.

### **2.5.2 Decentralized implementation and public service delivery**

Monisola & Abe (2014) conducted research with a representative scope of one hundred participants studied the relationship between inhabitant contribution in implementation and service delivery. This research exposed that absence of contribution in implementation delays operational service delivery besides can also make a way of absence of openness along with answerability which is essential for effective usage of accessible resources to the advantage of persons of the community. This research was also limited to the to a different area in context hence difficult to generalize the research findings in other regions like Jinja due to diverse political and cultural environment.

Green (2010) conducted an investigation in Bugabula constituency in Kamuli district to scrutinize the effect of resident contribution on dispersed provision of services. With expressive study strategy plus a representative of 192 representatives, research exposed that allocative effectiveness has a helpful influence to dispersed supply of services. This study also focused on service approachability then disregarded extra measures of supplying services namely accessibility, timeliness, value as well as sustainability.

Emmanuel Oyuku Ocen (2008) employed cross-regional secondary information to measure the effect of straight civilian contribution in regionalized supply of services during 2002-2010 in Lira district. Effect of contribution was measured in relations to the way it impacts effective

distribution of funds; responsibility then decrease of dishonesty; plus, even supply of goods. Emmanuel Oyuku Ocen (2008) established that the contribution of inhabitants had been negligible, also, the subsequent effect on regionalized supply of goods was insignificant. The current research differs significantly from reviewed study in various conceptual areas for example the reviewed study suffers from conceptual gaps since it measured direct citizen participation in general rather than considering the indicators of planning, implementation, monitoring as this study did.

### **2.5.3 Decentralized monitoring and public service delivery**

Mezgebe (2013) assessed the dispersed supply of services in the Health Sector. The research employed an expressive review study design besides used qualitative as well as quantitative information styles, precisely semi - questionnaires, semi-structured meetings then emphasis crowd dialogue. The results of the research revealed that nevertheless decentralization contributed improved medical services accessibility, there were restrictions to warranty satisfactory mortal option, topographical approachability as well as sufficient pharmacological goods for improved medical supply of services to the community. Also, there was letdown of answerability in relative to observing, monetary preparation, reportage as well as execution of actions, the obtainability of directing processes for grievances, robust official ability in form of management, labor administration as well as monetary administration capability. This study also focused on Health service delivery and disregarded other forms of service provision namely education, agriculture, infrastructure and others yet the current study will focus on public service delivery in general.

Additional research by Nayak & Samanta (2014) scrutinized the outcome of public's contribution in monitoring (joining gatherings, rising voice, placing grievances while making suggestions) on public service delivery in Isingiro district. This research was founded on key domestic grass root study of 250 participants of the district of Isingiro in Uganda. The investigators showed that rising vocal sound while allowing participations in a good way impacted supply of services.

The existing literature on decentralization of the monitoring function and service delivery indicates that decentralization of monitoring to the local people can offer considerable advantages like greater efficiency in organization as well as effectiveness in apportioning funds, deeper inhabitant contribution, as well as improved responsibility systems, although there exists inadequate practical proof of optimistic consequences (Smoke 2015). Therefore, this research presents the Civil Servants perception on the relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

## **2.6 Summary of Literature Review**

Most of past practical research on decentralization and services delivery had been carried out in other districts and regions of Uganda (Smoke 2015; Nayak & Samanta, 2014; Muriu, 2014; Edzii, 2017). There exists moderately trivial amount of effort as well as endeavors to steadily study the facts about the relationship between decentralization and service delivery in Eastern Uganda (Muriu, 2014; Macharia et al., 2014). Specifically, the relationship between perceived decentralization under the dimensions of planning, implementation, monitoring and public service delivery in the perspective of Jinja district is barely discovered. This study

presents the relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local government sub counties in Uganda.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The chapter presents the procedure which was followed in this research. This chapter covers the introduction, study design, the population of the research, coming up with the sample scope, as well as sampling methods and processes, information gathering techniques as well as tools, their validity and reliability, process of information gathering, analysis of information as well as measurement of variables.

### **3.2. Research design**

This research employed a cross sectional design used for a well-defined subject (Saunders et al., 2012, Neuman, 2009). It was based on survey design to collect information from the sample of the research population of a particular time (Amin 2005). In addition, given the limited duration within which the study is to be conducted, the researcher finds the cross sectional design more suitable (Neuman, 2009). Additional benefit is that it was more descriptive, cost effective, and the findings are not likely to be influenced as data was collected at a single point in time. This study employed a qualitative approach (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

### **3.3 Study population**

The population of the study was 24 respondents. Jinja District has 11 sub counties of which the level of decentralization is varied. The target populations of the study were 4 sub counties (at least 40%) including Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo Sub counties. At least each sub

county has at 45 technical staff members (Public servants) and from each sub county 5 public servants were chosen purposively giving rise to a study population of 20 respondents. However since the sub counties also constitute the local council members (Politicians), 4 local council chairpersons were included as key informants.

### 3.4. Determination of the Sample size

The sample size and selection for the research is presented in Table 1 below;

Table 3.1: Showing Sampling Techniques and Sample Representations of the Study

No	Category	Population	Sample	Sampling Technique
1	Local council Chairpersons	11	4	Purposive Sampling
	<b>Public Servants</b>			
2	Mafubira S/C	45	5	Purposive Sampling
3	Kakira S/C	45	5	Purposive Sampling
4	Busede S/C	45	5	Purposive Sampling
5	Budondo S/C	45	5	Purposive Sampling
<b>Total</b>		<b>185</b>	<b>24</b>	Purposive Sampling

**Source:** *Adapted from Jinja District Local Government Payroll verification report, 2018.*

### 3.5 Sampling techniques and procedures

Purposive sampling technique which is a non-probability sampling techniques was used for selection of respondents.

Here the chance that a particular case was selected for the sample depended on the subjective judgment of the researcher. As supported by Amin (2005), purposive sampling is regarded as favorable in selecting key informants who were more knowledgeable with what was going on in their areas of jurisdiction. On that ground, the study employed purposive sampling during the selection of key informants; these comprised the Local council Chairpersons in Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo Sub counties in Jinja District Local Government and Public servants in Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo Sub counties.

### **3.6. Data collection methods**

This study employed interview methods to gather information.

Interviews involve one on one encounter between the researcher and the respondents in order to obtain accurate and reliable data (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Therefore, the researcher interviewed Public servants in Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo Sub counties, the Local council Chairpersons in Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo Sub counties in Jinja District Local Government who were in position to provide the most reliable information. The interview guide was used by the researcher to provide in-depth data and also enable respondents to come up with other issues that were of interest to the matter under investigation.

The researcher gathered secondary information from documentary review for instance reading journals, dissertations, text books among others with an intention of establishing what other scholars wrote about the variables. Documentary review assisted the researcher to reconstruct the study variables and provided an in-depth analysis of different areas under study in comparison to the study area.



### **3.7 Data collection instruments**

This research used an interview guide and documentary check list.

Interview guide was used for key resourceful persons especially the Local council Chairpersons and Public servants in Mafubira, Kakira, Busede and Budondo Sub counties in Jinja District Local Government. The interview guide was used as a means to support and check the questionnaires instruments and interviews gave a chance for probing, hence being able to draw deeper information (Amin, 2005). The Interview guide was used to collect qualitative data for in-depth analysis of the study. This helped to standardize the interview situation and to get data necessary to satisfy the specific intents of the research.

Documentary evidence regarding the study was reviewed using check lists. The documents included performance reports, minutes among others. This was achieved by making use of check list to ensure that all the required information was collected.

### **3.8 Data quality control**

For a study to obtain appropriate data and produce accurate results there was need for ensuring quality of instruments through obtaining conformability, that was, the accuracy of the instruments and transferability, that was, dependability of the instruments as here under.

#### **3.8.1 Validity**

As defined by Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), validity refers to the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results. It is a degree to which results obtained from the analyses of data actually represents the phenomenon under study. The interview

guide was subjected to scrutiny by the researcher's supervisors and other research experts for validation purposes and it was found to be valid. In this study, during the interview guide construction, quality control and validity was ensured though.

Face validity, here the instrument was subjected to experts check whether it measures what it was intended to measure. Amin (2005) found that content validity focuses upon the extent to which an instrument corresponds to the theoretical concepts it is trying to measure. Furthermore, content validity was determined by the area covered by those who were asked to assess its content validity. Construct validity, which was maintained through restricting the questions to the conceptualization of the variables and ensuring that the indicators of a particular construct fall within the same construct. Data was synthesized, analyzed and reviewed to obtain insights and study conclusive information. This was partly because data coding or use of computers to analyze data was not done.

### **3.8.2 Transferability**

Transferability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). The data collection instrument was pretested on a two (2) of respondents from the population with the aim of ensuring that questions are accurate and clear in line with each objective of the study.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis using inductive and deductive reasoning. In order to determine whether the general aim of the research could be achieved or not, crucial questions were put forward to address the issue. Qualitative data was collected using interview guide and

secondary documents relating to decentralization and service delivery. Data was collected during the interview for presentation and discussion to complement the quantitative data and to highlight situations clearly for easy dissemination. Content analysis was used to test the authenticity of the information given by the respondents.

### **3.10 Ethical considerations**

The researcher sought permission to proceed to the field after clearance. The researcher then sought permission from Jinja Local Government District headquarters to conduct the research; then sought respondents' consent to conduct the study. Confidentiality was observed. The names of the respondents were not recorded on any of the documents rather codes were used in order to follow up on key information.

# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The researcher investigated the civil servants' perception on the relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties. Jinja district has most of its population in rural sub counties (Jinja rural), with a composition of 8 rural sub counties and 3 town councils, one municipality divided into 3 divisions. Jinja has 56 parishes and 399 villages. Of these, the researcher covered 2 rural sub counties and 2 sub counties with close proximity to town; Mafubira Sub County and Kakira town council, plus Jinja central division and 4 villages (Wairaka central, Mawoitto, Wakitaka and Musima villages) of Busede and Budondo.

Key informant interviews are conducted with technical officers in the district, including chief administrative officers, heads of departments, clerks to councils, senior administrative secretaries (responsible for sub-counties), and service delivery unit heads. These interviews focus on collecting summary information on the status of service delivery and verifying the actions undertaken by the political actors during the financial year.

This chapter presents the study findings from in-depth interviews conducted with the various stakeholders in Jinja district Local Government

Sub counties. The chapter is structured along three specific study objectives, namely; to establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties; to establish civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties and to establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized monitoring on public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties.

#### **4.2 Response Rate**

Out of a sample size of 24 people, 22 who constitute 92% of the sample managed to respond to the interviews while only 2 respondents who constitute 8% of the sample size were not in position to be interviewed. This lack of response from Jinja district local Government Sub counties staff may be attributed to factors like failure to get time due to their tight work schedules and other impasses that were beyond their control. This feedback from the respondents (92%) was enough to facilitate this study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999).

#### **4.3 Service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties**

Service delivery is the implementation of services and making sure they reach those people and places they are intended to (Wakoli, 2013). Service delivery is about the customer appreciating what is being delivered, in other words, service delivery. Also refers to the actual output or results of an organization as measured against the intended goals or objectives. In this study, perceptions on service delivery were investigated under the indicators of quality of service, timeliness of service and customer

satisfaction.

#### **4.3.1 Quality of Service**

As far as the quality of service is concerned, there was an overwhelming response from participants that there were mixed feelings as some services were perceived as good and timely quality services while some respondents seemed dissatisfied with some services in Jinja district local Government Sub counties. One respondent said;

*“Delivery of primary education is a success story in our Sub County. Primary school enrolment boomed with the introduction of the government’s ambitious Universal Primary Education (UPE) programmes in 1997. More so, access to education by the poor has increased at a faster rate than in the rest of society. This is indicative of the success of the UPE in Jinja district; however the quality of education is ever declining which can be attributed to the people supposed to be monitoring the programmes to ensure that it continues to be a success.”* Interviewee 7 on 21/7/19

In agreement another respondent said

*“Service delivery in many parts of the district has slowly improved although at a snail’s pace but better than before where for instance, Kakira Town Council sometimes failed to provide simple essential services such as garbage collection though the situation is much better than before we had the powers to plan and decide which services to deliver. But we put much of the blame on the central government which always provides meagre resources that are also never in time. But we have managed with what we have as the situation is much better than before we had some powers to decide and direct resources to what needs pressed us most”* Interviewee 2 on 15/7/19.

This implies that the level of service delivery in terms of quality of services and timeliness of services by the Jinja district local Government Sub counties is perceived to be satisfactory to expectation by most Civil Servants but requires more effort. This finding concurs with the views of Ssalongo (2016) who noted that generally, service providers, either health workers or teachers, claim that decentralization has brought better control over their resources, and this is one important reason why civil service staff are supportive of decentralization, yet, on the other hand, service receivers do not express that the services have greatly improved in recent years (Ssalongo, 2016).

Although the ultimate objective of decentralization is to reduce the persistent poverty in Uganda by improving the essential public services like health, education, transport and environmental management, this intention has not been fully realized, the impact of decentralization on improving public service delivery is visible and much better than before its implementation though not satisfactory. Other participants expressed similar perceptions in regards to quality of services offered, for example a respondent added;

*“Here in our sub-county, health is another social priority that has been entrusted with resources to finance primary health care centers and hospitals. Unlike in the case of education, outcomes in the health sector are ambiguous. Some services have greatly improved, for instance maternal care is so good as many expectant mothers can easily access the health center IVs that have been introduced yet in some cases medicines are not available in the hospital pharmacies.” Interviewee 17 on 2/8/19*

However from observation, it was clear that in Jinja district, there were some local governments that seem to be performing better than others. Kakira and Bugembe Town councils are for instance seen to be better performing lower local governments generally in terms of service delivery in areas related to health, education, cabbage collection and security.

#### **4.3.2 Timeliness of Services**

Documentary evidence revealed that at Jinja district local Government there are complaints about timeliness of services in the complaints' register available opened 24<sup>th</sup> January 2012 with 9 to 11 complaints received monthly on delayed services and lack of customer care against local government officers and other staff. The records showed that even the time taken to address complaints was not immediate, at most two-three months. When asked on measures in place to ensure provision of quality timely services, several participants believed that there were no serious mechanisms in place to improve on timeliness of service delivery.

In addition an officer interviewed said;

*“There is little success of decentralization due to the central governments’ failure to devolve more power and resources to the local levels”*

Interviewee 9 on 21/7/19.

There was an overwhelming consensus among the participants that the Jinja district local Government Sub counties were not doing enough to better service delivery. A respondent said;

*“Despite the few identified examples of successful service delivery in our district resulting from decentralization, there still remains a gap between*



*service provision and local needs. This gap is created by lack of adequate funding at the local level, and is largely reflected in the education and health sectors.” Interviewee 3 on 15/7/19.*

Such findings imply that the quality of services offered to the public by the sub Counties in Jinja district local government region are generally satisfactory and way better with decentralization but more needs to be done since the demand for more public services keep increasing and changing every day.

#### **4.3.3 Customer satisfaction**

Regarding customer satisfaction in service delivery, one respondent from Budondo indicated that;

*“Uganda’s decentralization process falls short of achieving its service delivery targets. He added that many reasons can be cited for this, such as the poor autonomy of the local governments, tight fiscal control by higher government and capacity constraints. To overcome these shortcomings the process of decentralization has to be properly sequenced. Public service delivery has to resonate with the needs of the poor and the accountability of local governments to local communities has to improve.”*

Other participants expressed similar perceptions in regards to mechanisms put in place to ensure provision of quality services by lower local governments in Jinja district, one respondent from Kakira Sub County remarked;

*“Much as transparency has generally improved since we are involved in planning and allocations of resources, however, transparency in the use of allocated resources and weak budgetary procedures with regard to*

*record-keeping and auditing is wanting. In education, for example, there was disproportionate distribution of finance to the schools, with the poor schools receiving less or nothing of the capitation grants. Parents and students have little or no information regarding the amount of the capitation grant entitled to them.*” Interviewee 20 on 2/8/19

Another respondent from Kakira Sub County added that;

*“It should be pointed out that the most daunting challenge facing decentralization as a framework for service delivery is a lack of capacity and personnel at sub-national government level to exercise responsibility for service delivery. The lower-level governments lack the ability to manage public finances and maintain proper accounting procedures.”*  
Interviewee 5 on 15/7/19.

The findings hereby imply that there was absence of a reasonable level of effectiveness in terms of service delivery in terms of quality of services, customer satisfaction, and timeliness of services served in the Jinja District. Such findings concur with the earlier literature on decentralization where decentralization has not led to greater accountability (Venugopal & Yilmaz, 2010).

One respondent from Mafubira Sub County noted that as a benefit of decentralization, the greater participation of women in politics is noteworthy. But this decentralization still has a long way to go before it can achieve the objectives of poverty reduction and enhance inclusiveness. The tight fiscal relationship between the levels of government has complicated the center’s role which is often construed by local authorities as interfering with the affairs of local governments. Upward accountability chains are in place and are stringent; however, there is a very little effort

on the part of the government to evolve a system of downward accountability to local people.

#### **4.4 Civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties**

The first objective of this study was to examine civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties. Therefore, this section explores findings on civil servants' perceptions which were investigated using interview questions. The findings are presented below;

##### **4.4.1 Problem Identification**

The researcher sought to find out whether problem identification was done collectively with the involvement of the local people at the grass root level in order to enhance better service delivery. There was an overwhelming response from participants in this study on how issues necessitating interventions were identified in Sub Counties of Jinja District local government, one respondent interviewed said;

*“In my view, there is improved governance in health-care provision in general because we can make decisions here. This is in spite of financial constraints necessitated by late disbursement of funds from the national government. At the Sub county level we are able to quickly make decisions on what priority health issues to focus on and to allocate these funds without the red tape that characterized the situation before decentralization. And of course sub county governments are much closer to the people and are therefore able to identify the real needs of their*

*communities.*” (In-depth interview on 16/7/19, Administrator, Budondo Health Centre IV)

Still on the relationship between planning and service delivery in Jinja district local government sub counties Uganda, there was an overwhelming consensus among the participants that joint problem identification with the involvement of the locals helped to improve service delivery. In confirmation, one participant said that;

*“ever since some aspects in planning were devolved to the sub counties and parishes, our local people for instance present roads, bridges, water sources, health centers and many other services points that they take as key priority areas and it is from this that the sub county councils start from in allocating the meager resources in their custody.”*

This is reported to be working quite well despite the resource limitations in terms of fund shortages. In agreement with the above finding, Anjum (2016) argued that while the administrative planning decentralization framework centered on the idea of politics, decentralization pursued in Uganda has brought government closer to the people though it has also placed heavy burdens on municipal institutions to provide services that they are ill-equipped to shoulder.

One Councilor stressed;

*“With decentralization, a local dispensary in my village has been improved and maternal health services introduced; hence, my people can secure prenatal services within my village on time. This is was only possible because members of Busede Town Council listened to the voices of my people who for long requested improvement of the health center in their area.”* Interviewee 11 on 18/7/19

Other participants expressed mixed perceptions in regards to the relationship between decentralized planning and service delivery in Jinja District. One the L3 Chairperson of Mafubira Town Council, who attends all of the Sub county council sessions indicated;

*“District government agencies are somewhat negligent even when it comes to informing lower local government councils about policy changes, changes in budget allocation, and other government information. District government agencies often fail to provide information to councilors even when they request it. Working materials of council sessions have long been unavailable to citizens hence greatly affecting our involvement in planning.”* Interviewee 16 on 17/7/19.

Such responses from respondents imply that local citizen participation in planning in the form of problem identification is possible and effective when there is enough information from the district government. Whenever such information has been reliably availed, the general perception indicates that service delivery has been positively impacted upon in the sub counties in terms of quality of services, customer satisfaction and timeliness of services in Jinja District local government sub counties and vice versa.

Several participants believed that their participation in identification of problems affecting their areas had helped to deliver quality services because they believed that resources would no longer be wasted in areas that could not benefit the local communities optimally. In Wairaka parish in Kakira sub county (Jinja District) a respondent noted that;

*“Bridges are in good conditions and they have eased the transportation services in the Sub County....We are excited about the many roads that are*

*in Kakira now compared to the years back and we appreciate government for that great job as for most of the things we highlight here in our meetings as our real problems are the ones that the Council takes as priority unlike the years before when roads that connected many villages to the city were not maintained because bridge which was not required was being built.”*

Interviewee 22 on 3/8/19

Such findings imply that decentralized planning enables local people to participate in the entire planning for services. This means that people at the grass roots are able to get the real services that they need because of their involvement, leading to efficiency and effectiveness in terms of customer satisfaction and timeliness of services in Jinja District local government sub counties.

Still in confirmation, other participants expressed different perceptions in regards to how decentralized planning affects service delivery in Jinja District. In Busede sub county many respondents reported that their roads have improved over time mainly because of voluntary community service on the roads done by the members of their community. One female elderly civil servant indicated that;

*“In Busede, roads are in good shape and also in the village areas. This is attributed to the bill that was passed in district council where community members should do “bulungi bwansi” on all roads in their respective areas.... We have managed to involve citizens to actively involve themselves in “Bulungi bwansi” to better up the town council roads.”*

Interviewee 12 on 18/6/19

*“On the other side, however, in the other parts of the district where the local people do get involved in planning and implementation, roads lack maintenance, are bushy, very narrow, impassable, and some communities do not have any access roads.”*

The findings on decentralized planning and service delivery indicate or show that decentralized planning if well implemented would yield adequate effectiveness and improve the level of service delivery in the Jinja District. It can be concluded that the more effective involvement of local community members in problem identification, the more empowered the community members are in discussing customer needs and hence the better the lower local governments are placed as far as service delivery is concerned as seen in sub counties in Jinja district.

#### **4.4.2 Project Formulation**

The study further sought to find out whether decentralization of the project formulation function empowers lower local government employees to offer better service delivery. There was an overwhelming response from participants in this study about decentralization of the project formulation in Jinja District, Several participants believed that let alone other levels of local government but project formulation at the lower local government is almost not existent. On this, one of the District Official interviewed said;

*“There is still a long way to go. Many things are left on paper but actual activities are not happening as they should. This is affected by staffing. There are few officers to follow the LLGs to ensure that activities are implemented.”* District Official, Jinja. Interviewee 19 on 23/7/19

Such a finding implies that in some cases project formulation at lower local government was not possible. This means that gaps are felt in cases where projects are simply designed from above and executed in the lower local governments without participation of the local people. This could lead to local government becoming inefficient and ineffective in terms of services offered by the lower local governments in Jinja District.

When asked about their perceptions on how decentralized project formulation impacts service delivery at lower local government in Jinja district, there was an overwhelming response from participants in this study that decentralization of the project formulation function if properly handled improves service delivery. On the same, one Town clerk interviewed said;

*“Uganda has had 22 years of decentralization and it has been a learning journey. The LG Act has been amended a record 13 times, the latest being September 2015.”* Jinja District official interviewed on 24/7/19.

In agreement, another one respondent interviewed said;

*“Tensions between administrative staff and politicians in the district are the consequence of the different kinds of legitimacy they invoke for their choices and decisions. Nominated technocratic and administrative personnel such as the Resident District Commissioner (RDC), the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), and the DEO generally base their decisions on national laws and guidelines as well as on professional information, whereas local politicians (notably the District Chairperson (DCP) are elected officials and have legitimate claims to represent their constituencies.”* Interviewee 14 on 18/7/19

Such a finding implies that decentralization of formulation of projects may



not improve on service delivery because the general perception of respondents is that the issue of projects is highly politicized by all the parties which negatively affect the quality of projects and their deliverables offered to public by the lower local governments.

Another respondent said;

*“The major service delivery challenges in our district include corruption among civil servants, most especially in works; the turnover rate of Sub county chiefs and town clerks; inadequate staffing; limited facilitation for supervision and monitoring; limited participation in sub-county council meetings; failure to follow up on service delivery concerns raised in monitoring reports; and, budget cuts by central government.”* Interviewee 1 on 14/7/19

Similarly one of the sub county official expressed similar perceptions in regards to decentralization of planning when she said;

*“The weak institutional and human resource capacities have compromised service delivery especially in the health sector; it has affected the procurement, distribution and use of medicines”.* Interviewee 10 on 17/6/19.

Such are indications that decentralization of planning function to sub counties has not got serious impact on the performance of the lower local governments which is likely to affect the level of service delivery in terms of quality of services, customer satisfaction and timeliness of services.

Of the respondents interviewed, 65% did agree that the district councilors supposed to pass the final projects and budgets were not competent

enough, and that many of them only valued projects that profited them financially than those that benefited community.

Basing on the study findings which show an overall agreement among the participants in regards to the relationship between decentralization of planning and service delivery, it is clear that the sub counties in Jinja are perceived to be struggling as regards planning of projects due to the challenges discussed above.

#### **4.4.3 Resource Mobilization**

The researcher further sought to find out whether decentralization of planning in terms resource mobilization empowers local government employees to offer better service delivery. The study findings revealed that resource mobilization was practiced in Jinja District local government. For instance there, was an overwhelming response from participants in this study that resource mobilization is carried out though with challenges as indicated by one respondent that;

*“We can hire grade three (primary school teacher) teachers, we also perform internal audit of our schools, handle budgets, accounts etc. As it may seem, in reality, we are not fully empowered. Rather than decentralizing authority down the hierarchy, only minimal powers have been accorded to us as far as financial powers are concerned, we are more autonomous such as I am fully empowered in resource allocation. I distributed Shs 2.5 billion among my schools. The district government system has brought more financial resources which have enhanced the quality of education. Our internal capacity though in mobilizing our own resources through done agencies on the hand has greatly improved our service delivery. We are able to deal with donors directly unlike when we*

*had to wait for the central governments to allocate donor projects to our communities. Several community based projects have sprung up because of the same. Our ability to mobilize local revenues through local taxes have also improved service delivery”* (Interviewee 5- District Education Officer).

Such a finding implies that lower level governments in Jinja district still face a number of related challenges that affect service delivery in terms of quality of services, customer satisfaction and timeliness of services by the local governments which would likely to stale or to improve at a snail’s pace. However based on their ability to mobilize local resources public service delivery has greatly improved and there is a noticeable change before and after the implementation of decentralization.

There was overall agreement among the participants in regards to resource mobilization and service delivery in the local Sub Counties, a respondent positively said;

*“Now if we need funds, we can get approval from the district government, otherwise it took months to get funds from the central government. Funds are now allocated to us and as a category 2 officer; I can fully utilize these funds according to the needs areas.”* Interviewee 10 on 17/7/19.

This implies that decentralization of resource mobilization as a form of decentralized planning has had a positive impact in terms of easing the works such as road repairs, garbage collection in the local governments mainly due to the local revenues. This is likely to improve on the level of service delivery in terms of quality of services, customer satisfaction and timeliness of services.

One process server interviewed expressed similar perceptions in regards to resource mobilization in the sub counties in Jinja district. A case in point of this was given by one town clerk about a rural school in Kakira town council that needed to be fenced off to reduce the theft of school property, land inclusive. The local government felt it was not their role but that of the central government, and so did the central government through the Ministry of Education and Sports. This created tension between the two tiers given the fact that the school has a very big pupil enrolment within the district.

However, on the contrary when asked whether this form of decentralized planning affects service delivery, the respondent interviewed said;

*“This year we wanted it to be the budget of the citizens, so we presented the draft budget to the citizens. However, citizens have more needs than we can realistically satisfy. It turns out that the debate does not make much sense and is not justified because people discuss it, but when it comes to deciding, we have to do what we have to do. Priorities must be covered. It is good that citizens tell us what they think about the budget, but realistically, they do not have much influence. We can shout slogans and tell stories, but citizens do not have much influence on the budget. The budget is limited by available funds and priorities. When those are satisfied, little remains to be influenced by the citizens.”* The secretary of the council, Bugembe TC interviewed on 8/8/19.

In agreement with the above, one respondent noted;

*“Uganda currently has a complex decentralized system; for example the health system consists of the district health infrastructure consisting of Village Health Teams/Health Centre I (VHTs or HC Is), HCs II, III and IV*

*plus general district hospitals. Beyond the district, the health system has Regional Referral Hospitals and National Referral Hospitals. Such a complex system calls for proper coordination, support supervision, inspection and resource mobilization.” Interviewee 10 on 17/7/19*

Still in agreement with the above finding, another respondent interviewed said;

*“Devolved powers under the decentralized planning have come along with the opportunity of abusing them through the interplay of corruption and service delivery. This kind of power abuse and struggle has made many district leaders feel it is alright to dip their hands in public purse for their own private use, let alone the less involvement and participation of the local communities/citizens in programmes and policies that are meant to impact on communities. Leaders both at the higher local government and central government usually connive and work together to implement programmes that will give them an opportunity to have a lion’s share.”*

Interviewee 1 on 14/7/19

Such findings imply that decentralized resource mobilization may not enable timeliness of services offered by lower local governments. This means that decentralized resource mobilization may leave gaps that may be felt leading to inefficiency that may affect service delivery negatively in terms of customer satisfaction and number of clients served by lower local governments in Jinja District.

In addition one District Education Officer interviewed expressed similar perceptions as he said;

*“There are sub-counties in Jinja district that have never reported more than 5 first grades in primary leaving examinations yet the highest*

*enrolment in UPE is in rural Uganda. This is mainly due negligence by the local leaders in terms of planning and mobilizing sufficient resources necessary to support schools in their areas. Secondly, there is a general decline in performance in rural primary schools of Uganda despite the high enrolment due to delayed release of UPE funds and other resources from the local governments to these rural areas despite the early release of funds from MoES.” However UPE through decentralization has seen the number of pupils in schools reach 81,582 as per last statistics provided by Jinja District Local Government in 2014.*

These findings imply therefore that the decentralization of the resource mobilization function to the lower local governments is perceived as a major challenge to some sub counties and taken to be the main cause of the service delivery challenges experienced. However, the power to mobilize their own resources on the other hand has greatly improved service delivery as indicated in the findings from the civil servants that were interviewed despite the challenges that have come with it.

#### **4.5 Civil servants’ perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties**

The second objective of this study was to examine civil servants’ perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties. Therefore, this section explores findings on decentralized implementation which was investigated using interview questions focusing on implementation approach, implementation structure and decision structure

as dimensions of decentralized implementation as practiced by lower local governments in Jinja District and their effect on service delivery.

#### **4.5.1 Implementation Approach and Service Delivery**

When asked about how they implement plans and how this affects service delivery in the lower local governments in Jinja district; one respondent said

*“I am partially empowered. If I want to take any action against those who are not performing well, I will start getting pressure from the top. Therefore I will not be able to take any action. We are like puppets in the hands of our superiors.”* Interviewee 14 on 18/7/19

Hence, this means that there is shortage of room for implementation by local government officials which is likely to affect service delivery negatively. These findings concur with Monisola & Abe (2014) who wrote that absence of contribution in implementation delays operational service delivery, besides, can also make a way of absence of openness as well as answerability which is essential for effective usage of accessible resources to the advantage of persons of the community.

Investigation and examination of documents revealed that Decentralized health services can only be better availed when there is: (a) adequate financing (for staff, drugs, and equipment); (b) clear performance measurements (e.g. at the level of health units and districts); (c) proper information flows (hence the importance of the health management information systems (HMIS); and (d) effective supervision, inspection and enforcement of performance standards by Ministry of Health, the District Health Officer, local politicians, the health unit management committees (HUMCs) or even the police (as in situations where medicines or PHC

funds are stolen). In cases or sub counties where all or most of the accountability variables work well, satisfactory services are provided. Where all or most of these factors are lacking, poor services are found and will be costlier as a result of multiple administrative units. (Green 2008:4)

In regard to health the statistics presented in 2014 showed that the number of households accessing the nearest health facility within a distance of 5km stood at 3,541 and for public health facilities stood at 7,375, a clear indication that decentralization was positively creating an impact.

Additional documentary reviews revealed that there were training workshops for local leaders on decentralization for three days; Training on the implementation of budget in 2012; Training on customer care; Achievements of the community service program; Training on the implementation of procurement guidelines in 2015. This means that training of local leaders was identified as part of the implementation structure which is likely to result into improved service delivery.

Still regarding implementation structure and service delivery, one respondent said

*“In Mafubira sub county, community members and local government officials have sometimes been summoned by the higher local governments to be presented with accountability on what funds are planned for UPE, how much is received, expenditures and deficits therein which makes the current UPE system clearer as far as resource allocation is concerned for effective quality education.”* Interviewee 19 on 23/8/19

In agreement, a respondent had this to say; *“The involvement of the community varies from area to area, as people who are well educated are actively involved, and in remote areas where literacy is very low, people*



*are less active.*” Interviewee 2 on 15/7/19.

In addition, the respondent emphasized that decentralized implementation has helped reduce on the cases of mismanagement in some cases. A respondent from Kakira Town Council said

*“The community is very active since decentralization such as in school councils. However, it varies from area to area. Urban and rural areas have a different environment. In rural areas, due to the lack of education and awareness among the community regarding their role in the school council, school councils are not very active. Generally, in these areas control remains with the head of the institutions. In urban areas school councils help schools in finances plus moral support.”* Interviewee 12 on 18/7/19

Furthermore, documentary reviews and synthesis revealed that there were implementation reports filed on several projects in Kakira Town Council for the year 2015/2016.

One of local leader, noted that;

*“Putting more emphasis on implementation with full participation of community members has led to improved service delivery in terms of timely delivery, improved customer care, reduced complaints and so many other achievements”.* A local politician in Bugembe Town Council however narrated that;

*“Even with decentralization, political factors considerably affect our performance. For example, if we want to transfer a worker, or appoint someone, a reference will come from the top to stop it. There is favoritism in the transfers and appointments of public servants. Bureaucracy also*

*hinders our performance by favoring their likes and dislikes.” Interviewee 22 on 03/8/19*

Another interviewee added:

*“The most influencing factor is the political interference. The provision of facilities is not being done on a needs basis. For example, one community already has a tube well and the political representatives will insist on having another in that community where it is needed or not at all. We cannot transfer even one person, because if we do, we are being approached from the top not to do so. The system’s main drawback is that it works on references from very well connected people.” (Interviewee-6 on 16/7/19)*

These findings imply therefore that the Jinja district lower local governments grapples with finding a proper implementation approach that matches its decentralization framework which is likely to negatively affect service delivery at the grass root level.

#### **4.5.2 Implementation Structures and Service Delivery**

Through the interviews the views of the respondents were recorded. The perception out there is that decentralization has been a magic bullet to all that ails public services owing to the fact that it was under the decentralization arrangement that the lower and higher local governments were established. This perception is mainly spearheaded by the Sub county governments. One respondent said

*“Decentralization has brought services closer to the people but worsened some aspects of services. For example, the capacity of our health facility has not been expanded to meet the increased referral maternal health-care*

*demand that has been occasioned by free maternal health care policy.”*

(Administrator, Budondo Health Centre IV on 16/7/19)

For health services, decentralization has brought in place District Health Committees, Sub County, Parish and up to Village health teams. However, there is a general widespread notion that services are not free and poor in the health facilities run by the counties.

However, from observation not many respondents seemed to have knowledge that the services were poor. This has resulted into citizens complaining constantly about the services. In confirmation of this finding, one respondent when asked whether she was satisfied with the decentralization implementation structures, had this to say;

*“Before decentralization, there were no funds at the local level; so ambulances were rare. And you see we in the Sub county health departments can now make decisions on whether to buy ambulances and how to use and maintain them. Ambulances are now available 24hrs”*

Interviewee 16 on 17/7/19

Hence, this implies that even when there are still challenges in service delivery due to several challenges, the decentralization strategy or arrangement is appreciated by the local population.

Still on whether decentralized implementation structures have improved service delivery, one respondent said;

*“After decentralization, education allocations, for example, often do not reach intended schools, and health allocations were reduced considerably*

*when districts were empowered to form their own budgets.” Interviewee 11 on 18/7/19*

This suggests that service delivery is likely to be negatively affected in these areas.

When a respondent asked about availability of staff at lower local governments said;

*“As far as different local government levels are concerned, the stock of human capital is generally lower in lower levels. Very often, this makes higher levels hesitant to transfer resources downwards, as they do not trust in the ability of lower levels to use their resources efficiently and to account for the funds they receive but fortunately with the limited staff, the sub counties have done tremendously well. Look at our performance here in Budondo, it speaks for itself.” Interviewee 19 on 23/7/19*

In confirmation of this finding related to staffing, a staff of Kakira Town Council said;

*“Delays and inconsistencies in the planning and budgeting as well as poor service delivery are prevalent in many local governments. Staffing structures and levels are partly inadequate, as they were not co-aligned with the devolution of functions and responsibilities similar to the case of revenue assignments.” Interviewee 12 on 18/7/19*

The findings therefore indicate that the general perception was that the decentralization of implementation to the local governments has to a great extent improved the level of service delivery however there are still a number of challenges that need to be streamlined to enable the decentralization framework function very well and this rotates around

provision of sufficient resources ranging from human, financial, infrastructural and so much more.

#### **4.5.3 Decision Making Structures and Service Delivery**

From the documents reviewed, Uganda's decentralization system functions through a unified set of elected authorities grounded at the district level (mainly planning and budgeting responsibility) and four lower government and administrative levels with more modest responsibilities. The district (LC5), sub-county (LC3), and village (LC1) councils are elected by universal adult suffrage, with county (LC4) and parish (LC2) levels elected indirectly or appointed ex-officio. District/city councils and sub-county councils (municipal divisions and town councils in urban areas) are corporate bodies and accounting levels. County councils (municipal councils and city divisions in urban areas), parishes (urban wards), and villages (urban cells) are administrative units. The NRM government has worked hard toward establishing a decentralized system to ease delivery of services which has been applauded by the citizens. (Golooba-Mutebi, 1999, pp105, 109). It was found that decisions relating to delivery of services are made at these levels. In agreement, a respondent said;

*“Ideally at every level of government, the decentralization policy has given enough powers to make decisions without interference from above, however in reality the case is quite different; there are some decisions that cannot be made at sub counties and even if they are made, they can be over turned at higher levels.”* Interviewee 16 on 17/7/19

This finding means that in some cases the decentralization of the decision making function to lower local governments is pseudo in nature, thus perceived to negatively affect service delivery.

Another respondent said;

*“We as politicians know that the Government initiated programs such as UPE for a right cause to benefit the local citizen, but decentralizing it was for political reasons for communities to think UPE is owned by the people yet the government still has total control over UPE. The current government is using this method as a political machine.”* Interviewee 14 on 18/7/19

This means that the level of decentralization of the decision making function is not leading to real results as they are intended but for hidden agendas.

#### **4.6 Civil servants’ perception on decentralized monitoring and public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties**

It was found that following the decentralization of powers to local governments under the decentralization system, local governments became an avenue to bring basic public services closer to the grassroots. Basic public services prioritized at the national level include: health, education, water and sanitation, agriculture and roads. By implication, therefore, local governments are held accountable for the quality of services in these key areas which, in effect reflects the overall performance of a local government at any one point in time.

##### **4.6.1 Data Management and Service Delivery**

Through the interviews conducted, interviewees 1, 4, 8, 9 & 22 in Musima

village, Mafubira Sub County asserted that;

*“...engagement of local community members in the monitoring of government program in Sub counties has enhanced transparency, community harmony, effective and efficient financial accountability even at the limited level it has been taking place”*. This implies that as a result of decentralization, there is community involvement in the monitoring function which has had a positive impact on service delivery in the sub counties. This correlates with Mezgebe (2013) who observed that decentralization with the local community armed with the monitoring arm contributed to improved medical services accessibility; there were restrictions to warranty satisfactory mortal option, topographical approachability as well as sufficient pharmacological goods for improved medical supply of services to the community.

On the contrary, in Buwenge Town Council, Interviewees 1, 2, 17 & 20 indicated that;

*“All public officers are perceived as being corrupt, fraudsters, embezzlers, window dressers, not transparent and they believe that financial statements are presented with material misstatements, thus forcing the public not to rely on them even if they are independently reviewed and acknowledged with qualified opinions.”* This perception is so because of non-involvement of the local population sometimes, although the perception is changing as more and more involvement of the local community in managing their affairs is changing their perception towards the activities of the local governments. Weekly debates and talk shows concerning the management of the activities that are directed towards delivery of public services are held on popular radio stations and the local

community are encouraged to call and air their opinions. This as a result of decentralization has greatly improved transparency and accountability in the sub counties in Jinja district local government.

In Namulesa Parish, Mafubira Sub County, a discussant reported that:

*“Initially we never had Baraza meetings and since then we have had several Baraza meetings though it was not mainly at the sub-county level though this has now been brought down to the sub county levels. Here we have different government workers like health workers, security people, who are tasked with responding to questions raised by community members on ongoing activities and educate the community about new programmes that would benefit the community. I think it was initiated a couple of years ago, remarked the respondent.”* Interviewee 19 on 23/7/19

This finding means that in some lower local government’s community members’ participation in monitoring had been long dropped before the introduction of decentralization, but after its inception service delivery has been enhanced with the monitoring arm of the local population strengthened though it has come with a challenge as noted by Emmanuel Oyuku (2008) because of inadequate funding from the central government.

In Musima Parish, Mafubira Sub County, the chairperson of the SMC at Musima primary school put it clear that;

*“The central government has given them a voice in the locality and can influence change by encouraging more children to attend school and proper rules for good governance at the school level. However, this is at school level and usually involves a few of the parents in decision making*



*since the higher local government usually gives us directives on what is to be done or implemented. With the inception of decentralization, the number of Parents-Teacher Association meetings are tripled over the year to aid in decision making regarding how schools should be run to benefit the community.*” Interviewee 12 on 18/7/19

This indicates that the much as the higher local government has the upper hand at district level in the current UPE under decentralization, there has been more involvement on the part of the local communities thereby creating more ownership of the system by the local community which has greatly impacted on quality education, especially rural Uganda.

#### **4.6.2 Accountability and Service Delivery**

On accountability and service delivery, interviewee 21 & 22 asserted that;

*“Adoption of the Public Financial Management Local Government Framework 2015 in the allocation of resources has significantly improved transparency and preparation of accountability hence influencing the level of financial accountability at the lower local governments.”* Interviewee 4, 3, 5, 7, 11, 20 added that *“...the strong internal controls through conducive control environment to meet set objectives, assessment of risk, information and communication, monitoring and control activities led to effective and efficient financial accountability.”* This means that to some degree the decentralization of the monitoring roles has to a proportional level resulted into improvement in service delivery.

Interviewees 1, 5, 6, 20, 21 & 22, accepted that financial accountability is done monthly together with the interim/ mid-way audit of financial reports

followed by annual audit at sub counties as requirement for public entities. However, interviewee 3, 5,6,7,9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 19 & 22, were quick to bring to notice that;

*“...the partisan politics at the district and sub county levels has induced selfishness where accountable officers swindle resources to the benefit of their political wing benefits other than the local government suggested programs and distort the documentation with support from more knowledgeable individuals whom they hire from outside the local governments, thus indicate poor financial accountability.”* Such is a common occurrence in most local governments in Uganda to the detriment of service delivery. As noted by Nalugo 2008, corruption is the biggest load that local governments in Uganda are facing as a bottleneck to effective and efficient service delivery.

In Bugembe Town Council, interviewee No 8, 9, 10, 12 &15 asserted that;

*“The district funding is inadequate to meet its budget which lead to poor financial accountability, delayed the service delivery as resources are misallocated to suit immediate district needs. The major source of local governments funding are conditional grants from the central government which constitute approximately 90% of the total annual funds.”*

Most of these districts are created as a reward for votes for the sitting political party while disguising it as a tool to bring services close to the local community. (Nalugo, 2008)

According to one respondent; *“the Government decided to decentralize because the center had failed to perform as expected hence the need to engage the local communities so as to create ownership of government programs.”*

The implication would be that the decentralization arrangement is perceived to improve service delivery in Jinja District local government. But in addition, the LC3 chairperson of Mafubira Sub County reported that; *“there is no political will for a developed and quality service delivery system in Uganda since decentralization is a political initiative, and it is only aimed at keeping the current ruling national resistance movement (NRM) in power,”* in line with assertions of Nalugo 2008.

As a result of decentralization of the monitoring function, most of the time there is conflict of interest among parties and at time divided loyalties. One head teacher reported a scenario where the lower local government expected him to approach a school challenge based on their demands while the higher local government expected him to follow their directives too. This is likely to negatively affect service delivery because it presents the decentralized system as a liability to communities and schools in rural with poor quality education and less accountability from the local government.

#### **4.6.3 Transparency and service delivery**

The majority of district officials interviewed characterized community involvement as a must. In this regard, an Interviewee stated that:

*“For services like education, most schools organize meetings with the community. Most of them do it at the end of the year, they mobilize all the parents of the children to come to the school. They normally do it when they want to benefit from government, like maybe they want construction of teacher’s houses something like that, then after that, that’s when government comes on board to implement what they have decided on. If it is teacher’s houses, you prioritize that one, if it is maybe buying text books, you prioritize according to what the parents have agreed upon in the*

*meeting. Even after taking those things to the school, you still call a community meeting. So those meetings are the ones that will always handle such things.*” Interviewee 10 on 17/7/19, this means that service delivery is likely to be better; in agreement another respondent observed that;

*“Financial transparency has improved as there is the technical staff and the politicians to make it more transparent. In the system prior to decentralization, only the technical people were responsible for the accountability of the entire system, now the sharing of accountability at the district and sub county level has made it more transparent.”* (Interviewee 1)

However, some lower local governments in Jinja District proved that weak inspection or monitoring was a top factor in explaining why Primary Health Care medicines do not always reach the beneficiaries. This means that decentralization of the monitoring function has not completely solved the challenge of providing quality services to the local community.

Findings by Smoke (2015) pointed that decentralization of the monitoring function to the local people can offer considerable advantages like greater efficiency in organization as well as effectiveness in apportioning funds, deeper inhabitant contribution, as well as improved responsibility systems, although there exists inadequate practical proof of optimistic consequences.

#### **4.7 Summary**

The chapter contained the presentation and analysis of the study findings and it was structured along three specific study objectives; to establish the civil servants’ perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties;

to establish civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties; and to establish civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized monitoring on public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties. The study observed that the perceptions on the relationship between decentralized planning, implementation and monitoring were slightly positive among the civil servants though many indicated that after its rollout, it is over 22 years and a lot should have been achieved by now, though the impact is visible. Challenges such as high levels of corruption, lack of political will, inadequate resources among others were reported by majority of respondents as causes of unsatisfactory service delivery level in all the Sub Counties visited by the researcher. In all, the sub counties in Jinja have done a tremendous job with service delivery following the roll out of decentralization despite the bottlenecks that the sub counties face.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This study investigated the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties. The previous chapter was concerned with analyzing, presenting and interpreting data got from respondents in Jinja district local Government Sub counties. This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations according to the specific objectives of the study.

#### **5.2 Summary of the findings**

The study investigated the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local Government Sub counties. This study was guided by the following specific objectives; to establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized planning and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties; establish civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized implementation and public service delivery in Jinja District local government Sub counties; and to establish the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralized monitoring on public service delivery in Jinja District Local government Sub counties.

### **5.2.1 Civil servants' perception on decentralized planning and public service delivery**

The study findings revealed that there was an overwhelming consensus among the participants that joint problem identification with the involvement of the locals helped to improve service delivery. The general perception indicated that service delivery has been positively impacted upon in the sub counties in terms of quality of services, customer satisfaction and timeliness of services in Jinja District. Decentralization of resource mobilization as a form of decentralized planning has had a positive impact in terms of easing the works such as road repairs, garbage collection, and provision of clean water, rural electrification programmes and community health care in the local governments mainly due to the local revenues. Several participants believed that their participation in identification of problems affecting their areas had helped to deliver quality services because they believed that resources would no longer be wasted in areas that could not benefit the local communities optimally. As per the data provided by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, education in Jinja district showed great improvement.

About 8,164 which is 6.2% of the children aged between 6-15 years were not attending primary school, with males constituting at 6.4% the number being 4,156 and females 6.0%, the number being 4,008 in relation to the 81,582 children currently enjoying Universal Primary Education which is currently run in a decentralized manner.

### **5.2.2 Civil servants' perception on decentralized implementation and public service delivery**

The study findings revealed that there is shortage of room for

implementation by local government officials which is likely to affect service delivery negatively. Participants held the perception that decentralized implementation helped to reduce on the cases of mismanagement of resources. Many respondents had the perception that putting more emphasis on implementation with full participation of community member has led to improved service delivery in terms of timely delivery, improved customer care, reduced complaints and so many other achievements. The general perception was that the decentralization of implementation to the local governments has to a great extent improved the level of service delivery however there are still a number of challenges that need to be streamlined to enable the decentralization framework function very well and this rotates around provision of sufficient resources ranging from human, financial, infrastructural and so much more. The data provided by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics indicated that the number of households that had access to community services like a primary school within a radius of 5km had increased to from 1,809 which was only about 1.7% of the population in 2014 to 4,435 indicating that decentralization implementation had had a positive impact in improving service delivery in the sub counties.

### **5.2.3 Civil servants' perception on decentralized monitoring on public service delivery**

The study findings revealed that in some lower local governments, community members' participation in monitoring was being choked which results into poor service delivery. There was a perception that the higher local government have the upper hand at district level in the current decentralized system, less for the local communities thereby creating less ownership of the system by the local community which has negatively



impacted on quality of services for instance in health and education in Jinja especially in the rural areas. Participants held the perception that weak inspection or monitoring was a top factor in explaining why public services do not always reach the beneficiaries citing mostly medicines that do not reach the health centers, meaning that decentralization of the monitoring arm has not completely solved the challenge of quality services provision.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

The following conclusions were drawn from the study findings; they were presented according to the study objectives;

#### **5.3.1 Civil servants' perception on decentralized planning and public service delivery**

Basing on the study findings, it can be concluded that the more effective involvement of local community members in problem identification, the more empowered the community members are in discussing customer needs and hence the better the lower local governments are placed as far as service delivery is concerned in Jinja district local government.

#### **5.3.2 Civil servants' perception on decentralized implementation and public service delivery**

Basing on the study findings, it is concluded that there was limited tendency for strategic implementation and often inadequate coordination of actors; even instances that seem more strategic may be partly a by-product of other forces and/or are relatively superficial. In Jinja district, technical and governance capacity were generally weak, so the lack of an implementation strategy tied to developing capacity (aside from limited use of compliance/performance based capital grants) led to weak outcomes

and created space for those who wished to selfishly gain through corruption.

### **5.3.3 Civil servants' perception on decentralized monitoring and public service delivery**

Basing on the study findings, it is concluded that weak inspection or monitoring was a top factor in explaining service deliverables such as medicines not always reaching the beneficiaries meaning that decentralization has not completely solved the challenge of providing services to the local community.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

As a result of these study findings, the investigator put forward the following recommendations;

The study recommends the professionalization of the function of local councils to improve the impact of their work, supervision of implementation of council decisions, and better participation of citizens in decision making and monitoring activities of the local governments. The increase in the number of household that could access a health facility with a distance of 5km stands at 3,541 as per the last statistics provided by Jinja district local government. The house holds that could access the nearest public health facility stood at 7,375 a clear indication that decentralization has had a positive contribution in public service delivery regardless of the impasses along its exodus.

As noted by the researcher, the long arm of the central government is far too reaching into the activities of the local governments and the impact can be felt in the activities of the sub counties. The central government should

be willing to devolve more powers to the local governments without unnecessary influence to give room to the local governments to freely decide on programmes that benefit their localities.

The issue of delayed and inadequate funding from government has been a major constraint that 80% of the respondents cited. Having been given the powers, it highly recommended that the local governments stretch their vision towards mobilizing their own funds from donors and locally to finance their programmes.

The study recommends establishing a community assembly to increase citizen participation in decision making, especially in allocating public funds. Community representatives should join council members in making decisions on important issues and should have the right to vote.

The study recommends that local governments should employ young people which a mindset that has been changed towards serving the community in local government agencies to increase efficiency, access, and openness to combat the challenge of corruption.

The study recommends ensuring ongoing funding for the work of community councils as a way to improve performance. Increase citizen information. The researcher feels that the timely and systematic distribution of working materials of the local leaders to all those who attend council sessions would enable better citizen participation and increase their knowledge about the work of the local governments.

## **5.5 Areas for further research**

This study has focused on the civil servants' perception on relationship between decentralization and public service delivery in Jinja district local

Government Sub counties. Future research should focus on the following areas; investigating the other factors that affect service delivery in local governments in Uganda.

### **5.6 Limitations of the study**

The sample for the present study comprised of 24 local government staff members from Jinja district local Government Sub counties. This sample is only a very small proportion of the entire number of local governments in the country. Therefore, research studies with much larger sample size would be required to ensure appropriate generalization of the findings of the study.

The present study has relied solely on qualitative methodology of data and is therefore restrictive. Therefore, more of quantitative methodology of data collection should be undertaken in future to provide wider perspective to the present study. For instance, the research design can employ correlational study methodology or analysis to provide a holistic picture to the given subject.

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## **APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE**

1. How would you rate the level of public service delivery in Jinja District Local government? Explain briefly
2. How would do you comment about the level of accessibility to public services in this area? Please explain
3. How would do you comment about the timeliness of public services in this area? Please explain
4. How would do you comment about the quality of public services in this area? Please explain
5. How would do you comment about the level of sustainability of public services in this area? Please explain
6. Has decentralization of programmes and project planning to your district government in any way influenced public service delivery in this area? If yes please elaborate
7. Has decentralization of implementation of government programmes and projects to your district government in any way influenced public service delivery in this area? If yes please elaborate
8. Has decentralization of monitoring of government programmes and projects to your district government in any way influenced public service delivery in this area? If yes please elaborate
9. Are there any other elements of decentralization that you think have influenced public service delivery in this area? If yes, which ones?

# 추상

## 지방분권과 공공서비스제공 관계에 대한 진자 지역 지방자치단체 공무원의 인식 조사

Obel Thomas

서울대학교 행정대학원

글로벌행정전공

본 연구는 우간다의 진자 지역 지방자치단체 공무원의 지방분권과 공공서비스 제공의 관계에 대한 인식을 분석한 연구이며, 지방분권 기획, 집행 및 감사 등의 서비스 제공에 대한 정부와 그 개발협력 기관의 개입에도 불구하고, 서비스 제공은 여전히 품질, 접근성 및 적시성 측면에서 여전히 미흡하다는 것에 의문을 두고있다. 따라서, 본 연구를 통해 진자 지방자치단체 공무원의 지방분권적 감시와 공공서비스 제공에 대한 인식을 확립하고자 한다. 본 연구를 위해 질적 및 탐험적 사례 연구 설계에 따라, 25명의 응답자로부터 정성적 데이터를 수집하였고 인터뷰를 진행했으며, 해당 데이터를 종합, 분석 및 검토하여 시사점을 도출했다. 연구 결과, 지역주민을 포함한 공동 문제 식별 참여자들간의 압도적인 공감대가 서비스 제공 개선에 큰 도움이 되었다; 분권화된 집행으로 자원 부실 관리가 감소한 반면 일부 기초지방자치단체, 지역사회 구성원들의 감시 참여는

오래 전에 중단되거나 관리가 부실하여 서비스 제공의 질이 감소하였다. 결과적으로, 지역사회 구성원들의 문제 식별 참여가 효율적일수록, 그리고 지역사회 구성원들의 권한이 클수록 기초지방자치단체의 서비스제공 품질이 높은 것으로 나타났다; 전략적 집행과 부적절한 참여자간 협력은 제한적인 경향을 나타냈다; 부실한 점검이 서비스 제공 품질에 대하여 가장 많은 부분을 설명하는 요인으로써, 약품이 수혜자에게 전달되지 않는 사례 등은 분권화가 불충분한 감시 기능을 해결하지 못함을 보여준다.

**주제어:** 지방분권화, 지방분권 기획, 지방분권 집행, 지방분권 감시 & 공공서비스 제공

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